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Selected and edited by LAURA E. LOCKWOOD and AMY R. KELLY.

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

PUBLISHERS NEW YORK

THE VISTA OF ENGLISH VERSE

COMPILED BY

HENRY S. PANCOAST

REPRINTED FROM "STANDARD ENGLISH POEMS," WITH ADDITIONAL SELECTIONS

NEW YORK

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

1911

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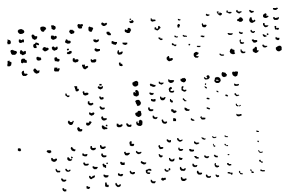

PREFACE

In this book the reader may travel down the broad highway of English poetry, from the days of Spenser and Shakespeare to our own time. Pausing in these early years of a new century, with the songs of living poets in the air, he can look back—as through a long vista—over the way he has come.

There are a few priceless things that cannot be too often seen or too well known; the familiar makes its peculiar appeal, as well as the novel, and if there is an exhilaration in making a new friend, there is also a gentler and perhaps a deeper satisfaction in finding an old one. Here the reader travels down the middle of the highway, resisting many temptations to turn aside and explore the less trodden ways that branch off here and there on either hand; he passes many a retreat where he might profitably linger, yet, keeping to the main track, he welcomes much that is endeared by long association, and he sees, perhaps more clearly, the course and changing character of that great spiritual thoroughfare, spanning both time and space, which is built to music and of music "and therefore built forever."

The present collection is not entirely new; it is an old one in a new form. Some years ago I prepared a book of *Standard English Poems* for students of English poetry. I have often been told since then that this collection, although intended primarily for such

and college use, would be acceptable to lovers of poetry at large. I have accordingly tried to obliterate the trail of the schoolmaster, and to adapt it to the taste and needs of the general reader. The notes have been omitted, the book has been put into a more attractive and artistic form, and the Victorian period has been enlarged by the introduction of a number of poems by recent and living writers.

It is a pleasant duty to add that the book in its new form owes its existence to Mr. Roland Holt, who has followed its compilation with unfailing interest, and at whose suggestion it was undertaken.

ISLESFORD, MAINE,
July 2nd, 1911.

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THE VISTA OF ENGLISH VERSE

THE VISTA OF ENGLISH VERSE

PART FIRST

BALLADS

(OF VARIOUS AND UNCERTAIN DATES)

CHEVY CHASE

(Sometimes called *The Hunting of the Cheviot*)

THE Persë owt off Northombarlonde,
and avowe to God mayd he
That he wold hunte in the mowntayns
off Chyviat within days thre,
In the magger of doughtë Dogles,
and all that ever with him be.

The fattiste hartes in all Cheviat
he sayd he wold kyll, and cary them away:
'Be my feth,' sayd the dougheti Doglas agayn,
'I wyll let that hontyng yf that I may.'

Then the Persë owt off Banborowe cam,
with *him a myghtee* meany,
With fifteen hondrith archares bold off blood and
bone,
the wear chosen owt of shyars thre.

This begane on a Monday at morn,
in Cheviat the hillys so he;
The chylde may rue that ys unborn,
it wos the more pittë.

The dryvars thorowe the woodës went,
for to reas the dear;
Bomen byckarte uppone the bent
with ther browd aros cleare.

Then the wyld thorowe the woodës went,
on every sydë shear;
Greahondës thorowe the grevis glent,
for to kyll thear dear.

This begane in Chyviat the hyls abone,
yerly on a Monnyn-day;
Be that it drewe to the oware off none,
a hondrith fat hartës ded ther lay.

The blewe a mort uppone the bent,
the semblyde on sydis shear;
To the quyrry then the Persë went,
to se the bryttlynge off the deare.

He sayd, 'It was the Duglas promys
this day to met me hear;
But I wyste he wolde faylle, verament;'
a great oth the Persë swear.

At the laste a squyar off Northomberlonde
lokyde at his hand full ny;
He was war a the doughetie Doglas commy
with him a myghttë meany.

Both with spear, bylle, and brande,
yt was a myghtti sight to se;
Hardyar men, both off hart nor hande,
wear not in Cristiantë.

The wear twenti hondrith spear-men good,
withoute any feale;
The wear borne along be the watter a Twyde,
yth bowndës of Tividale.

'Leave of the brytlyng of the dear,' he sayd,
'and to your boÿs lock ye tayk good hede;
For never sithe ye wear on your mothars borne
had ye never so mickle nede.'

The dougheti Dogglas on a stede,
he rode alle his men beforne;
His armor glytteryde as dyd a glede;
a boldar barne was never born.

'Tell me whos men ye ar', he says,
'or whos men that ye be:
Who gave youe leave to hunte in this Chyviat chays,
in the spyt of myn and of me.'

The first mane that ever him an answear mayd,
yt was the good lord Persë:
'We wyll not tell the whoys men we ar,' he says,
'nor whos men that we be;
But we wyll hounte hear in this chays,
in the spyt of thyné and of the.

'*The fattiste hartës* in all Chyviat
we have kyld, and cast to carry them away:'
'*Be my troth,*' sayd the doughetë Dogglas agay
'*therfor the ton* of us shall de this day.'

Then sayd the doughtë Doglas
unto the lord Persë:
'To kyll alle thes giltles men,
alas, it wear great pittë!

'But, Persë, thowe art a lord of lande,
I am a yerle callyd within my contrë;
Let all our men uppone a parti stande,
and do the battell off the and of me.'

'Nowe Cristes cors on his crowne,' sayd the lor
Persë,
'who-so-ever ther-to says nay;
Be my troth, doughttë Doglas,' he says,
'thow shalt never se that day.

'Nethar in Ynglonde, Skottlonde, nar France,
nor for no man of a woman born,
But, and fortune be my chance,
I dar met him, on man for on.'

Then bespayke a squyar off Northombarlonde,
Richard Wytharyngton was his nam;
'It shall never be told in Sothe-Ynglonde,' h
says,
'to Kyng Herry the Fourth for sham.

'I wat youe byn great lordës twaw,
I am a poor squyar of lande:
I wylle never se my captayne fyght on a fylde,
and stande my selffe and loocke on,
But whylle I may my weppone welde,
I wylle not fayle both hart and hande.'

That day, that day, that dredfull day!
the first fit here I fynde;
And youe wyll here any mor a the hountyng a the Chyviat,
yet ys ther mor behynde.

The Ynglyshe men hade ther bowys yebent,
ther hartes wer good yenoughe;
The first off arros that the shote off,
seven skore spear-men the sloughe.

Yet byddys the yerle Doglas uppon the bent,
a captayne good yenoughe,
And that was sene verament,
for he wrought hom both woo and wouche.

The Dogglas partyd his ost in thre,
lyk a cheffe cheften off pryde;
With suar spears off myghtte tre,
the cum in on every syde:

Thrughe our Ynglyshe archery
gave many a wounde fulle wyde;
Many a doughetë the garde to dy,
which ganyde them no pryde.

The Ynglyshe men let ther boÿs be,
and pulde owt brandes thet wer brighte;
It was a hevy syght to se
bryght swordes on basnites lyght.

Thorowe ryche male and myneyeple,
many sterne the strocke done streght;
Many a *freyke that* was fulle fre,
ther undar foot dyd lyght.

At last the Duglas and the Persë met,
lyk to captayns of myght and of mayne;
The swapte togethar tylle the both swat,
with swordes that wear of fyn myllan.

Thes worthë freckys for to fyght,
ther-to the wear fulle fayne,
Tylle the bloode owte off thear basnetes sprente,
as ever dyd heal or rayn.

'Yelde the, Persë,' sayde the Doglas,
'and i feth I shalle the brynge
Wher thowe shalte have a yerls wagis
of Jamy our Skottish kynge.

'Thou shalte have thy ransom fre,
I hight the hear this thinge;
For the manfullyste man yet art thowe
that ever I conqueryd in filde fighttynge.'

'Nay,' sayd the lord Persë,
'I told it the beforne,
That I wolde never yeldyde be
to no man of a woman born.'

With that ther cam an arrowe hastely,
forthe off a myghttë wane;
Hit hathe strekene the yerle Duglas
in at the brest-bane.

Thorowe lyvar and longës bathe
the sharpe arrowe ys gane,
That never after in all his lyffe-days
he spake mo wordës but ane:
That was, 'Fyghte ye, my myrry men, whyllys
ye may,
for my lyff-days ben gan.'

The Persë leanyde on his brande,
and sawe the Duglas de;
He tooke the dede mane by the hande,
and sayd, 'Wo ys me for the!

'To have savyde thy lyffe, I wolde have partyde with
my landes for years thre,
For a better man, of hart nare of hande,
was nat in all the north contrë.'

Off all that se a Skottishe knyght,
was callyd Ser Hewe the Monggombyrry;
He sawe the Duglas to the deth was dyght,
he spendyd a spear, a trusti tre.

He rod uppone a corsiare
throughe a hondrith archery;
He never stynttyde, nar never blane,
tylle he cam to the good lord Persë.

He set uppone the lorde Persë
a dynte that was full soare;
With a suar spear of a myghttë tre
clean thorow the body he the Persë ber,

A the tothar syde that a man myght se
a large cloth-yard and mare:
Towe bettar captayns wear nat in Cristiantë
then that day slan wear ther.

An archar off Northomberlonde
say slean was the lorde Persë;
He bar a bende bowe in his hand,
was made off trusti tre.

An arow, that a cloth-yarde was lang,
to the harde stele halyde he;
A dynt that was both sad and soar
he sat on Ser Hewe the Monggombyrry.

The dynt yt was both sad and sar,
that he of Monggomberry sete;
The swane-fethars that his arrowe bar
with his hart-blood the wear wete.

Ther was never a freake wone foot wolde fle,
but still in stour dyd stand,
Heawyng on yche othar, whylle the myghte d
with many a balfull brande.

This battell begane in Chyviat
an owar befor the none,
And when even-songe bell was rang,
the battell was nat half done.

The tocke . . . on ethar hande
be the lyght off the mone;
Many hade no strenght for to stande,
in Chyviat the hillys abon.

Of fifteen hondrith archars of Ynglonde
went away but seventi and thre;
Of twenti hondrith spear-men of Skotlonde,
but even five and fifti.

But all wear slayne Cheviat within;
the hade no strengthe to stand on hy;
The chylde may rue that ys unborne,
it was the mor pittë.

Thear was slayne, withe the lord Persë,
Sir Johan of Agerstone,
Ser Rogar, the hinde Hartly,
Ser Wyllyam, the bolde Hearone.

Ser Jorg, the worthë Loumle,
a knyghte of great renowen,
Ser Raff, the ryche Rugbe,
with dyntes wear beaten dowene.

For Wetharryngton my harte was wo,
that ever he slayne shulde be;
For when both his leggis wear hewyne in to,
yet he knyled and fought on hys kny.

Ther was slayne, with the dougheti Duglas,
Ser Hewe the Monggombyrry,
Ser Davy Lwdale, that worthë was,
his sistar's son was he.

Ser Charls a Murrë in that place,
that never a foot wolde fle;
Ser Hewe Maxwelle, a lorde he was,
with the Doglas dyd he dey.

So on the morrowe the mayde them byears
off birch and hasell so gray;
Many wedous, with wepyng tears,
cam to fache ther makys away.

Tivydale may carpe off care,
Northombarlond may mayk great mon,
For towe *such captayns as* slayne wear thear,
on the March-parti shall never be non.

Word ys commen to Eddenburrowe,
to Jamy the Skottische kynge,
That dougheti Duglas, lyff-tenant of the Marches
he lay slean Chyviot within.

His handdës dyd he weal and wryng,
he sayd, 'Alas, and woe ys me!
Such an othar captayn Skotland within,'
he sayd, 'ye-feth shuld never be.'

Worde ys commyn to lovly Londone,
till the fourth Harry our kynge,
That lord Persë, leyff-tenante of the Marchis,
he lay slayne Chyviat within.

'God have merci on his solle,' sayde Kyng Harry
'good lord, yf thy will it be!
I have a hondrith captayns in Ynglonde,' he
sayd,
'as good as ever was he:
But, Persë, and I brook my lyffe,
thy deth well quyte shall be.'

As our noble kynge mayd his avowe,
lyke a noble prince of renowen,
For the deth of the lord Persë
he dyde the battell of Hombyll-down;

Wher syx and thrittë Skottishe knyghtes
on a day wear beaten down:
Glendale glyterryde on ther armor bryght,
over castille, towar, and town.

This was the hontynge off the Cheviat,
that tear begane this spurn;
Old men that knowen the grounde well yenough
call it the battell of Otterburn.

At Otterburn begane this spurne
uppone a Monnynday;
Ther was the doughtë Doglas slean,
the Persë never went away.

Ther was never a tym on the Marche-partes
sen the Doglas and the Persë met,
But yt ys mervele and the rede blude ronne not
as the reane doys in the stret.

Jhesue Crist our balys bete,
and to the blys us brynge!
Thus was the hountynge of the Chivyat:
God send us alle good endyng!

SIR PATRICK SPENS

(From *Percy's Reliques*, pub. 1765. Date uncertain, but a popular ballad in 1580)

The King sits in Dumferling toune,
Drinking the blude-reid wine;
'O whar will I get guid sailor,
To sail this schip of mine?'

Up and spak an eldern knicht,
Sat at the king's richt kne:
'Sir Patrick Spence is the best sailor,
That sails upon the se.'

The king has written a braid letter,
And signed it wi his hand,
And *sent it to Sir Patrick* Spence,
Was walking on the sand.

The first line that Sir Patrick red,
A loud lauch lauched he;
The next line that Sir Patrick red
The teir blinded his ee.

'O wha is this has don this deid,
This ill deid don to me,
To send me out this time o' the yeir,
To sail upon the se!

'Mak hast, mak haste, my mirry men all,
Our guid schip sails the morne:'
'O say na sae, my master deir,
For I feir a deadlie storme.

'Late late yestreen I saw the new moone,
Wi the auld moone in hir arme,
And I feir, I feir, my deir master,
That we will cum to harme.'

O our Scots nobles wer richt laith
To weet their cork-heild schoone;
Bot lang owre a' the play wer playd,
Thair hats they swam aboone.

O lang, lang may their ladies sit,
Wi thair fans into their hand,
Or eir they se Sir Patrick Spence
Cum sailing to the land.

O lang, lang may the ladies stand,
Wi thair gold kems in their hair,
Waiting for thair ain deir lords,
For they 'll se thame na mair.

Haf owre, haf owre to Aberdour,
It's fiftie fadom deip,
And thair lies guid Sir Patrick Spence,
Wi the Scots lords at his feit.

WALY, WALY, LOVE BE BONNIE

(From Allingham's *Ballad Book*, 1864)

O Waly, waly, up the bank,
O waly, waly, doun the brae,
And waly, waly, yon burn-side,
Where I and my love wer wont to gae!
I lean'd my back unto an aik,
I thocht it was a trustie tree,
But first it bow'd and syne it brak',—
Sae my true love did lichtlie me.

O waly, waly, but love be bonnie
A little time while it is new!
But when it's auld it waxeth cauld,
And fadeth awa' like the morning dew.
O wherefore should I busk my heid,
Or wherefore should I kame my hair?
For my true love has me forsook,
And says he 'll never lo'e me mair.

Noo Arthur's Seat sall be my bed,
The sheets sall ne'er be press'd by me;
Saint Anton's well sall be my drink;
Since my true love's forsaken me.
Martinmas wind, when wilt thou blaw,
And shake the green leaves off the tree?
O *gentle death, whan wilt thou come?*
For of my life I am wearie.

'Tis not the frost that freezes fell,
  Nor blawing snaw's inclemencie,
'Tis not sic cauld that makes me cry;
  But my love's heart grown cauld to me.
When we cam' in by Glasgow toun,
  We were a comely sicht to see;
My love was clad in the black velvet,
  An' I mysel' in cramasie.

But had I wist before I kiss'd
  That love had been so ill to win,
I'd lock'd my heart in a case o' goud,
  And pinn'd it wi' a siller pin.
Oh, oh! if my young babe were born,
  And set upon the nurse's knee;
And I mysel' were dead and gane,
  And the green grass growing over me!

THE TWA SISTERS O' BINNORIE

(From the same)

There were twa sisters sat in a bow'r;
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
A knight cam' there, a noble wooer,
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

He courted the eldest wi' glove and ring,
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
But he lo'ed the youngest aboon a' thing,
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

The eldest she was vexed sair,
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
And sair envied her sister fair,
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

Upon a morning fair and clear,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
She cried upon her sister dear,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

'O sister, sister, tak' my hand,'
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
'And let's go down to the river-strand,'
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

She's ta'en her by the lily hand,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
And down they went to the river-strand
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

The youngest stood upon a stane,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
The eldest cam' and pushed her in,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

'O sister, sister, reach your hand!'
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
'And ye sall be heir o' half my land'—
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

'O sister, reach me but your glove!'
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
'And sweet William sall be your love'—
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

Sometimes she sank, sometimes she swam,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
Till she cam' to the mouth o' yon mill-dam,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

Out then cam' the miller's son
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
And saw the fair maid soummin' in,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

'O father, father, draw your dam!'
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
'There's either a mermaid or a swan,'
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

The miller quickly drew the dam,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
And there he found a drown'd womàn,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

Round about her middle sma'
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
There went a gouden girdle bra'
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

All amang her yellow hair
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
A string o' pearls was twisted rare,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

On her fingers lily-white,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
The jewel-rings were shining bright,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

And by there cam' a harper fine,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
Harpèd to nobles when they dine,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

And when he looked that lady on,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
He sigh'd and made a heavy moan,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

He's ta'en three locks o' her yellow hair,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
And wi' them strung his harp sae rare,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

He went into her father's hall,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
And played his harp before them all,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

And sune the harp sang loud and clear,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
'Fareweel, my father and mither dear!'
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

And neist when the harp began to sing,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
'Twas 'Fareweel, sweetheart!' said the string,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

And then as plain as plain could be,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
'There sits my sister wha drownèd me!
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.'

BONNIE GEORGE CAMPBELL

(From Motherwell's *Minstrelsy*, 1827. Date of ball uncertain)

Hie upon Hielands,
And low upon Tay,
Bonnie George Campbell
Rade out on a day.
Saddled and bridled
And gallant rade he;
Hame cam his gude horse,
But never cam he!

Out cam his auld mither
Greeting fu' sair,
And out cam his bonnie bride
Rivin' her hair.
Saddled and bridled
And booted rade he;
Toom hame cam the saddle
But never cam he!

"My meadow lies green,
And my corn is unshorn;
My barn is to big,
And my babie's unborn."
Saddled and bridled
And booted rade he;
Toom hame cam the saddle,
But never cam he.

HELÉN OF KIRCONNELL

Part Second

(From Scott's *Border Minstrelsy*, 1802–3)

I wish I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
O that I were where Helen lies,
On fair Kirconnell Lee!

Curst be the heart that thought the thought,
And curst the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd Helen dropt,
And died to succour me!

O think na ye my heart was sair,
When my love dropt down and spak nae mair!
There did she swoon wi' mickle care
On fair Kirconnell Lee.

As I went down the water-side,
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirconnell Lee!

I lighted down, my sword did draw,
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
For her sake that died for me.

O, Helen fair, beyond compare!
I'll make a garland of thy hair,
Shall bind my heart for evermair,
Until the day I die.

O that I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
  Says, "Haste, and come to me!"

O Helen fair! O Helen chaste!
If I were with thee, I were blest,
Where thou lies low, and takes thy rest,
  On fair Kirconnell Lee.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding-sheet drawn ower my een
And I in Helen's arms lying,
  On fair Kirconnell Lee.

I wish I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
And I am weary of the skies,
  For her sake that died for me.

PART SECOND

SPENSER TO DRYDEN.

EDMUND SPENSER

Cir. 1552–1599

THE FAERIE QUEENE

(From the First Book, which contains *The Legend of the Knight of the Red Crosse, or of Holinesse*, published with Bks. II. and III., 1590)

I.

Lo! I, the man whose Muse whylome did maske,
As time her taught, in lowly Shephards weeds,
Am now enforst, a farre unfitter taske,
For trumpets sterne to chaunge mine oaten reeds,
And sing of knights and ladies gentle deeds;
Whose praises having slept in silence long,
Me, all too meane, the sacred Muse areeds
To blazon broade emongst her learned throng:
Fierce warres and faithfull loves shall moralize my song.

II.

Helpe then, O holy virgin, chiefe of nyne,
Thy weaker novice to performe thy will;
Lay forth out of thine everlasting scryne
The antique rolles, which there lye hidden still,
Of Faerie knights, and fayrest Tanaquill,
Whom that most noble Briton Prince so long
Sought through *the world*, and suffered so much ill,
That I must rue his undeserved wrong:
O helpe thou my weake wit, and sharpen my dull tong!

III.

And thou, most dreaded impe of highest Jove,
Faire Venus sonne, that with thy cruell dart
At that good knight so cunningly didst rove,
That glorious fire it kindled in his hart;
Lay now thy deadly heben bowe apart,
And with thy mother mylde come to mine ayde;
Come, both; and with you bring triumphant Mart,
In loves and gentle jollities arraid,
After his murderous spoyles and bloudie rage allayd.

IV.

And with them eke, O Goddesse heavenly bright,
Mirrour of grace, and maiestie divine,
Great ladie of the greatest Isle, whose light
Like Phoebus lampe throughout the world doth shine,
Shed thy faire beames into my feeble eyne,
And raise my thoughtes, too humble and too vile,
To thinke of that true glorious type of thine,
The argument of mine afflicted stile:
The which to heare vouchsafe, O dearest Dread, a while.

CANTO I.

The patron of true Holinesse,
Foule Errour doth defeate;
Hypocrisie, him to entrappe,
Doth to his home entreate.

I.

A gentle Knight was pricking on the plaine,
Ycladd in mightie armes and silver shielde,
Wherein old dints of deepe woundes did remaine,
The cruell markes of many a bloody fielde;

Yet armes till that time did he never wield:
His angry steede did chide his foming bitt,
As much disdayning to the curbe to yield:
Full iolly knight he seemd, and faire did sitt,
As one for knightly giusts and fierce encounters fitt.

II.

And on his brest a bloodie crosse he bore,
The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,
For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,
And dead, as living ever, him ador'd:
Upon his shield the like was also scor'd,
For soveraine hope, which in his helpe he had,
Right, faithfull, true he was in deede and word;
But of his cheere did seeme too solemne sad;
Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.

III.

Upon a great adventure he was bond,
That greatest Gloriana to him gave,
That greatest glorious Queene of Faery lond,
To winne him worshippe, and her grace to have,
Which of all earthly thinges, he most did crave:
And ever as he rode, his hart did earne,
To prove his puissance in battell brave
Upon his foe, and his new force to learne;
Upon his foe, a Dragon horrible and stearne.

IV.

A lovely Ladie rode him faire beside,
Upon a lowly asse more white then snow;
Yet she much whiter; *but the* same did hide
Under a vele, that wimpled was full low;
And over all a blacke stole shee did throw:

As one that inly mournd, so was she sad,
And heavie sate upon her palfry slow;
Seemed in heart some hidden care she had;
And by her in a line a milke-white lambe she lad.

V.

So pure and innocent, as that same lambe,
She was in life and every vertuous lore;
And by descent from royall lynage came
Of ancient kinges and queenes, that had of yore
Their scepters stretcht from east to westerne shore
And all the world in their subiection held;
Till that infernall feend with foule uprore
Forwasted all their land, and them expeld;
Whom to avenge she had this Knight from sea compeld.

VI.

Behind her farre away a Dwarfe did lag,
That lasie seemd, in being ever last,
Or wearied with bearing of her bag
Of needments at his backe. Thus as they past,
The day with cloudes was suddeine overcast,
And angry Iove an hideous storme of raine
Did poure into his lemans lap so fast,
That everie wight to shrowd it did constrain;
And this faire couple eke to shroud themselves wer fain.

VII.

Enforst to seeke some covert nigh at hand,
A shadie grove not farr away they spide,
That promist ayde the tempest to withstand;
Whose *loftie trees*, yclad with sommers pride,
Did spred so broad, that heavens light did hide.

Not perceable with power of any starr:
And all within were pathes and alleies wide,
With footing worne, and leading inward farr:
Faire harbour that them seemes; so in they entred ar.

VIII.

And foorth they passe, with pleasure forward led,
Ioying to heare the birdes sweete harmony,
Which, therein shrouded from the tempest dred,
Seemd in their song to scorne the cruell sky.
Much can they praise the trees so straight and hy,
The sayling pine; the cedar proud and tall;
The vine-propp elme; the poplar never dry;
The builder oake, sole king of forrests all;
The aspine good for staves; the cypresse funerall;

IX.

The laurell, meed of mightie conquerours
And poets sage; the firre that weepeth still;
The willow, worne of forlorne paramours;
The eugh, obedient to the benders will;
The birch for shaftes; the sallow for the mill;
The mirrhe sweete-bleeding in the bitter wound;
The warlike beech; the ash for nothing ill;
The fruitfull olive; and the platane round;
The carver holme; the maple seeldom inward sound.

X.

Led with delight, they thus beguile the way,
Untill the blustring storme is overblowne;
When, weening to returne whence they did stray,
They cannot finde that path, which first was showne
But wander too and fro in waies unknowne,

Furthest from end then, when they neerest weene,
That makes them doubt their wits be not their owne
So many pathes, so many turnings seene,
That which of them to take, in diverse doubt they been.

XI.

At last resolving forward still to fare,
Till that some end they finde, or in or out,
That path they take, that beaten seemd most bare,
And like to lead the labyrinth about;
Which when by tract they hunted had throughout,
At length it brought them to a hollowe cave,
Amid the thickest woods. The Champion stout
Eftsoones dismounted from his courser brave,
And to the Dwarfe a while his needlesse spere he gave.

XII.

"Be well aware," quoth then that Ladie milde,
"Least suddaine mischiefe ye too rash provoke:
The danger hid, the place unknowne and wilde,
Breedes dreadfull doubts: oft fire is without smoke,
And perill without show: therefore your stroke,
Sir Knight, withhold, till further tryall made."
"Ah Ladie," sayd he, "shame were to revoke
The forward footing for an hidden shade:
Vertue gives her selfe light through darknesse for to wade."

XIII.

"Yea, but," quoth she, "the perill of this place
I better wot then you: though nowe too late
To wish you backe returne with foule disgrace,
Yet wisedome warnes, whilst foot is in the gate,

To stay the steppe, ere forced to retrate.
This is the wandring wood, this Errours den,
A monster vile, whom God and man does hate:
Therefore I read beware." "Fly, fly," quoth then
The fearful Dwarfe; "This is no place for living men."

XIV.

But, full of fire and greedy hardiment,
The youthfull Knight could not for ought be staide;
But forth unto the darksom hole he went,
And looked in: his glistring armor made
A litle glooming light, much like a shade;
By which he saw the ugly monster plaine,
Halfe like a serpent horribly displaide,
But th'other halfe did womans shape retaine,
Most lothsom, filthie, foule, and full of vile disdaine.

[The Red Cross Knight, assisted by Una, does battle with the dragon, Error. As the combat progresses, the hideous serpent-brood of Error, "deformed monsters, foul and black as ink," swarming about the Knight sorely encumber him. The poet thus compares them to a cloud of gnats.]

XXIII.

As gentle shepheard in sweete eventide,
When ruddy Phebus gins to welke in west,
High on an hill, his flocke to vewen wide,
Markes which doe byte their hasty supper best;
A cloud of cumbrous gnattes doe him molest,
All striving to infixe their feeble stinges,
That from their noyance he no where can rest;
But *with his clownish hands* their tender wings
He brusheth oft, and oft doth mar their murmurings.

XXIV.

Thus ill bestedd, and fearefull more of shame
Then of the certeine perill he stood in,
Halfe furious unto his foe he came,
Resolved in minde all suddenly to win,
Or soone to lose, before he once would lin;
And stroke at her with more then manly force,
That from her body, full of filthie sin,
He raft her hatefull heade without remorse:
A streame of cole-black blood forth gushed from h
corse.

. . . . . .

XXVII.

His Lady seeing all that chaunst, from farre,
Approcht in hast to greet his victorie;
And saide, "Faire Knight, borne under happ
starre,
Who see your vanquisht foes before you lye;
Well worthie be you of that armory,
Wherein ye have great glory wonne this day,
And proov'd your strength on a strong enimie;
Your first adventure: Many such I pray,
And henceforth ever wish that like succeed it may!"

[Having re-mounted his steed, the Red-Cross Knigl
and Una at length meet in the forest an "aged sire
clad in black, having a gray beard and a sober aspec
The Knight, having saluted him, is conducted to
hermitage on the skirts of the forest, where the ol
man tells him in pleasing words about Saints an
popes: so they pass the evening in discourse.]

XXXVI.

lrouping night thus creepeth on them fast;
he sad humor loading their eyeliddes,
ssenger of Morpheus, on them cast
slombring deaw, the which to sleep them
biddes.
their lodgings then his guestes he riddes:
e when all drownd in deadly sleepe he findes,
his studie goes; and there amiddes
ıagick bookes, and artes of sundrie kindes,
s out mighty charmes to trouble sleepy minds.

XXXVII.

choosing out few words most horrible,
ıone them read!) thereof did verses frame;
which, and other spelles like terrible,
d awake blacke Plutoes griesly dame;
ursed heven; and spake reprochful shame
ghest God, the Lord of life and light.
l bad man! that dar'd to call by name
Gorgon, prince of darknes and dead night;
ı Cocytus quakes, and Styx is put to flight.

XXXVIII.

orth he cald out of deepe darknes dredd
ıs of sprights, the which, like litle flyes,
ing about his ever-damned hedd,
e whereto their service he applyes,
le his friendes, or fray his enimies:
se he chose out two, the falsest twoo,
ttest for to forge true-seeming lyes;
ıe of them *he gave a message* too,
· *by him selfe staide* other worke to doo.

XXXIX.

He, making speedy way through spersed ayre,
And through the world of waters wide and deepe,
To Morpheus house doth hastily repaire.
Amid the bowels of the earth full steepe,
And low, where dawning day doth never peepe,
His dwelling is; there Tethys his wet bed
Doth ever wash, and Cynthia still doth steepe
In silver deaw his ever-drouping hed,
Whiles sad Night over him her mantle black doth spred.

XL.

Whose double gates he findeth locked fast;
The one faire fram'd of burnisht yvory,
The other all with silver overcast;
And wakeful dogges before them farre doe lye,
Watching to banish Care their enimy,
Who oft is wont to trouble gentle Sleepe.
By them the Sprite doth passe in quietly,
And unto Morpheus comes, whom drowned deepe
In drowsie fit he findes; of nothing he takes keepe.

XLI.

And, more to lulle him in his slumber soft,
A trickling streame from high rock tumbling downe
And ever-drizling raine upon the loft,
Mixt with a murmuring winde, much like the sowne
Of swarming bees, did caste him in a swowne.
No other noyse, nor peoples troublous cryes,
As still are wont t' annoy the walled towne,
Might there be heard; but carelesse Quiet lyes,
Wrapt in eternall silence farre from enimyes.

XLII.

The messenger approching to him spake;
But his waste words retourned to him in vaine.
So sound he slept, that nought mought him awake.
Then rudely he him thrust, and pusht with paine,
Whereat he gan to stretch: but he againe
Shooke him so hard, that forced him to speake.
As one then in a dreame, whose dryer braine
Is tost with troubled sights and fancies weake,
He mumbled soft, but would not all his silence breake.

XLIII.

The Sprite then gan more boldly him to wake,
And threatned unto him the dreaded name
Of Hecate: whereat he gan to quake,
And, lifting up his lompish head, with blame
Halfe angrie asked him, for what he came.
"Hether," quoth he, "me Archimago sent,
He that the stubborne sprites can wisely tame;
He bids thee to him send for his intent
A fit false dreame, that can delude the sleepers sent."

XLIV.

The god obayde; and, calling forth straight way
A diverse dreame out of his prison darke,
Delivered it to him, and downe did lay
His heavie head, devoide of careful carke;
Whose sences all were straight benumbd and starke.
He. backe returning by the yvorie dore,
Remounted up as light as chearefull larke;
And on his litle *winges* the dreame he bore
In *hast unto his lord,* where he him left afore.

XLV.

Who all this while, with charmes and hidden artes
Had made a lady of that other spright,
And fram'd of liquid ayre her tender partes,
So lively, and so like in all mens sight,
That weaker sence it could have ravisht quight:
The maker selfe, for all his wondrous witt,
Was nigh beguiled with so goodly sight.
Her all in white he clad, and over it
Cast a black stole, most like to seeme for Una fit.

XLVI.

Now when that ydle Dreame was to him brought,
Unto that Elfin Knight he bad him fly,
Where he slept soundly, void of evil thought,
And with false shewes abuse his fantasy,
In sort as he him schooled privily.
And that new creature, borne without her dew,
Full of the makers guyle, with usage sly,
He taught to imitate that Lady trew,
Whose semblance she did carrie under feigned hew.

[This phantom, in the outward semblance of Una, conducts herself with such lightness that the Knight is perplexed with doubts of her goodness and truthfulness. At last, restless and tormented by evil delusions conjured up by Archimago, the Knight mounts his steed and flies with the dwarf. Thus parted from Una, or Truth, by the wiles of the Enchanter, the deluded Knight falls into peril in a meeting with Duessa, or Falsehood.

Meanwhile the heavenly Una, his true bride, missing her Knight, sets out in search of him, alone and sorrowful. The poet then tells how the lion comes to *guard her in her need.*]

CANTO III.

Forsaken Truth long seeks her love,
and makes the Lyon mylde;
Marres blind Devotions mart, and fals
in hand of treachour vylde.

I.

Nought is there under heav'ns wide hollownesse,
That moves more cleare compassion of mind,
Then beautie brought t' unworthie wretchednesse
Through envies snares, or fortunes freakes unkind.
I, whether lately through her brightnes blynd,
Or through alleageance and fast fealty,
Which I do owe unto all woman kynd,
Feele my hart perst with so great agony,
When such I see, that all for pitty I could dy.

II.

And now it is empassioned so deepe,
For fairest Unaes sake, of whom I sing,
That my fraile eyes these lines with teares do steepe,
To thinke how she through guileful handeling,
Though true as touch, though daughter of a king,
Though faire as ever living wight was fayre,
Though nor in word nor deede ill meriting,
Is from her Knight devorced in despayre,
And her dew loves deryv'd to that vile witches shayre.

III.

Yet she, most faithfull ladie, all this while
Forsaken, wofull, solitairie mayd,
Far from *all peoples preace*, as in exile,
In wildernesse and wastfull deserts strayd,

To seeke her Knight; who subtily betrayd
Through that late vision, which th' enchanter wrought
Had her abandoned. She of naught affrayd,
Through woods and wastness wide him daily sought
Yet wished tydinges none of him unto her brought.

IV.

One day, nigh wearie of the yrksome way,
From her unhastie beast she did alight;
And on the grasse her dainty limbs did lay
In secrete shadow, far from all mens sight;
From her fayre head her fillet she undight;
And layd her stole aside. Her angels face,
As the great eye of heaven, shyned bright,
And made a sunshine in the shady place;
Did never mortall eye behold such heavenly grace.

V.

It fortuned, out of the thickest wood
A ramping lyon rushed suddeinly,
Hunting full greedy after salvage blood;
Soone as the royall Virgin he did spy,
With gaping mouth at her ran greedily,
To have attonce devoured her tender corse.
But to the pray when as he drew more ny,
His bloody rage aswaged with remorse,
And, with the sight amazd, forgat his furious forse.

VI.

Instead thereof he kist her wearie feet,
And lickt her lilly hands with fawning tong;
As he her wronged innocence did weet.
O how can beautie maister the most strong,

ɜimple truth subdue avenging wrong!
e yielded pryde and proud submission,
lreading death, when she had marked long,
art gan melt in great compassion;
zling teares did shed for pure affection.

VII.

lyon, lord of everie beast in field,"
she, "his princely puissance doth abate,
ıightie proud to humble weake does yield,
full of the hungry rage, which late
rickt, in pittie of my sad estate:—
, my lyon, and my noble lord,
oes he find in cruell hart to hate
at him lov'd, and ever most adord,
od of my life? why hath he me abhord?"

VIII.

ıding teares did choke th' end of her plaint,
softly ecchoed from the neighbour wood;
ıd to see her sorrowful constraint,
ngly beast upon her gazing stood;
ittie calmd, downe fell his angry mood.
, in close hart shutting up her payne,
he Virgin borne of heavenly brood,
her snowy palfrey got agayne
her strayed champion, if she might attayne.

IX.

ɔn would not leave her desolate,
th her went along, as a strong gard
chast person, *and a faythfull mate*
sad troubles and misfortunes hard:

Still, when she slept, he kept both watch and wa
And, when she wakt, he wayted diligent,
With humble service to her will prepard:
From her fayre eyes he took commandëment,
And ever by her lookes conceived her intent.

[Archimago, learning of the whereabouts of U
assumes the arms and appearance of the Red C
Knight, and,—being too fearful of the lion to join
—approaches near enough to her to be seen. Una
ing, as she supposes, him whom she has sought thro
wide deserts, and with great toil and peril, goes u
him in joy and humbleness, while Archimago, feigr
to be her Knight, greets her with words of welc
and vows of faithful service.]

XXX.

His lovely words her seemd due recompence
Of all her passed paines; one loving howre
For many yeares of sorrow can dispence;
A dram of sweete is worth a pound of sowre.
Shee has forgott how many woful stowre
For him she late endurd; she speakes no more
Of past: true is, that true love hath no powre
To looken backe; his eies be fixt before.
Before her stands her Knight, for whom she toyld
sore.

XXXI.

Much like, as when the beaten marinere,
That long hath wandred in the ocean wide,
Ofte soust in swelling Tethys saltish teare;
And long time having tand his tawney hide
With blustring breath of heaven, that none can

And scorching flames of fierce Orions hound;
Soone as the port from far he has espide,
His chearfull whistle merily doth sound,
And Nereus crownes with cups; his mates him pledge around.

XXXII.

Such ioy made Una, when her Knight she found;
And eke th' Enchanter ioyous seemde no lesse
Then the glad marchant, that does vew from ground
His ship far come from watrie wildernesse;
He hurles out vowes, and Neptune oft doth blesse.
So forth they past; and all the way they spent
Discoursing of her dreadful late distresse,
In which he askt her, what the lyon ment;
Who told her all that fell, in iourney as she went.

XXXIII.

They had not ridden far, when they might see
One pricking towards them with hastie heat,
Full strongly armd, and on a courser free
That through his fiersenesse fomed all with sweat,
And the sharpe yron did for anger eat,
When his hot ryder spurd his chauffed side;
His looke was sterne, and seemed still to threat
Cruell revenge, which he in hart did hyde;
nd on his shield *Sans loy* in bloody lines was dyde.

[Archimago, in the guise of the Red Cross Knight, ius journeying with Una meets a Paynim, or Saracen, amed *Sansloy*. *Sansloy* attacks Archimago, who is verthrown. When he is unhelmed, Una sees to her irprise the face of Archimago instead of that of the ed Cross Knight. *The Paynim*, leaving Archimago *ing, rudely approaches Una* and drags her from her

palfrey. The poet then describes the combat of th Paynim with the lion.]

XLI.

But her fiers servant, full of kingly aw
And high disdaine, whenas his soveraine Dame
So rudely handled by her foe he saw,
With gaping iawes full greedy at him came,
And, ramping in his shield, did weene the same
Have reft away with his sharp rending clawes:
But he was stout, and lust did now inflame
His corage more, that from his griping pawes
He hath his shield redeemd; and forth his sword h drawes.

XLII.

O then, too weake and feeble was the forse
Of salvage beast, his puissance to withstand!
For he was strong, and of so mightie corse,
As ever wielded speare in warlike hand;
And feates of armes did wisely understand.
Eftsoones he perced through his chaufed chest
With thrilling point of deadly yron brand,
And launcht his lordly hart: with death opprest
He ror'd aloud, whiles life forsooke his stubborn brest.

XLIII.

Who now is left to keepe the forlorne Maid
From raging spoile of lawlesse victors will?
Her faithful gard remov'd; her hope dismaid;
Her selfe a yielded pray to save or spill!
He now, lord of the field, his pride to fill,
With foule reproches and disdaineful spright
Her vildly entertaines; and, will or nill
Beares her away upon his courser light
Her prayers naught prevaile; his rage is more o *might.*

XLIV.

And all the way, with great lamenting paine,
And piteous plaintes she filleth his dull eares,
That stony hart could riven have in twaine;
And all the way she wetts with flowing teares;
But he, enrag'd with rancor, nothing heares.
Her servile beast yet would not leave her so,
But followes her far of, ne ought he feares
To be partaker of her wandring woe,
More mild in beastly kind, then that her beastly foe.

[After many mishaps and adventures the Book end with the happy union of the Red Cross Knight and Una;—the marriage of Holiness and Truth.]

BOOK II.

CANTO VI.

THE STORY OF SIR GUYON, OR THE KNIGHT OF TEMPERANCE

Guyon is of immodest Merth
Led into loose desyre;
Fights with Chymochles, whiles his brother burnes in furious fyre.

I.

A harder lesson to learne Continence
In ioyous pleasure then in grievous paine;
For sweetnesse doth allure the weaker sence
So strongly, that uneathes it can refraine
From that which feeble nature covets faine;
But griefe and wrath, that be her enemies,
And foes of life, she better can abstaine:
Yet Ver*tue vauntes in both* her victories;
And Guyon in them all shewes goodly mysteries.

[Cymochles having met a damsel who represents in temperate pleasure, is tempted by her to neglect duty in inglorious idleness and self-indulgence. He falls under the spell of her blandishments and his coming under her allurements to the Idle Lake, the home of pleasure, is thus described:]

XI.

Whiles thus she talked, and whiles thus she toyd,
They were far past the passage which he spake,
And come unto an island waste and voyd,
That floted in the midst of that great lake;
There her small gondelay her port did make,
And that gay payre, issewing on the shore,
Disburdened her. Their way they forward take
Into the land that lay them faire before,
Whose pleasaunce she him shewde, and plentiful great store.

XII.

It was a chosen plott of fertile land,
Emongst wide waves sett, like a little nest,
As if it had by Nature's cunning hand
Bene choycely picked out from all the rest,
And laid forth for ensample of the best:
No daintie flowre or herbe that growes on grownd,
No arborett with painted blossomes drest
And smelling sweete, but there it might be fownd
To bud out faire, and throwe her sweete smels all around.

XIII.

No tree whose braunches did not bravely spring;
No braunch, whereon a fine bird did not sitt;
No bird, but did her shrill notes sweetly sing;
No song but did containe a lovely ditt.

Trees, braunches, birds, and songs, were framed fitt
For to allure fraile mind to careless ease:
Carelesse the man soone woxe, and his weake witt
Was overcome of thing that did him please;
So pleased did his wrathfull purpose faire appease.

XIV.

Thus when shee had his eyes and sences fed
With false delights, and fild with pleasures vayn,
Into a shady dale she soft him led,
And layd him downe upon a grassy playn;
And her sweete selfe without dread or disdayn
She sett beside, laying his head disarmd
In her loose lap, it softly to sustayn,
Where soone he slumbred fearing not be harm'd,
The whiles with a love lay she thus him sweetly charmd:

XV.

"Behold, O man! that toilsome paines doest take,
The flowrs, the fields, and all that pleasaunt growes,
How they themselves doe thine ensample make,
Whiles nothing envious nature them forth throwes
Out of her fruitfull lap; how, no man knowes,
They spring, they bud, they blossome fresh and faire,
And decke the world with their rich pompous showes;
Yet no man for them taketh paines or care,
Yet no man to them can his carefull paines compare.

XVI.

"The lilly, lady of the flowring field,
The flowre-de-luce, her lovely paramoure,
Bid *thee to them thy fruit*lesse labors yield,
*And soone leave off this toy*lsome weary stoure:

Loe! loe; how brave she decks her bounteous boı
With silkin curtens, and gold coverletts,
Therein to shrowd her sumptuous belamoure!
Yet neither spinnes nor cards, ne cares nor fretl
But to her mother Nature all her care she letts.

XVII.

"Why then doest thou, O man, that of them all
Art lord, and eke of nature soveraine,
Wilfully make thyselfe a wretched thrall,
And waste thy ioyous howres in needelesse paine,
Seeking for daunger and adventures vaine?
What bootes it al to have, and nothing use?
Who shall him rew that swimming in the maine
Will die for thrist, and water doth refuse?
Refuse such fruitlesse toile, and present pleasu
chuse."

XVIII.

By this she had him lulled fast asleepe,
That of no worldly thing he care did take:
Then she with liquors strong his eies did steepe,
That nothing should him hastily awake.
So she him lefte, and did herselfe betake
Unto her boat again, with which she clefte
The slouthfull wave of that great griesy lake:
Soone shee that Island far behind her lefte,
And now is come to that same place where first ı
wefte.

[Sir Guyon, who has also been assailed by the ten
tations of Pleasure, next encounters Mammon, or t
temptations of Avarice.]

BOOK II

CANTO VII.

Guyon findes Mamon in a delve
sunning his threasure hore;
Is by him tempted, and led downe
To see his secret store.

II.

So Guyon, having lost his trustie guyde,
Late left beyond that Ydle Lake, proceedes
Yet on his way, of none accompanyde;
And evermore himselfe with comfort feedes
Of his own vertues and praise-worthie deedes.
So, long he yode, yet no adventure found,
Which Fame of her shrill trompet worthy reedes:
For still he traveild through wide wastfull ground,
That nought but desert wildernesse shewed all around.

III.

At last he came unto a gloomy glade,
Cover'd with boughes and shrubs from heavens light,
Whereas he sitting found in secret shade
An uncouth, salvage, and uncivile wight,
Of griesly hew and fowle ill-favour'd sight;
His face with smoke was tand, and eies were bleard,
His head and beard with sout were ill bedight,
His cole-blacke hands did seeme to have ben seard
In smythes fire-spitting forge, and nayles like clawes appeard.

IV.

His yron cote, all overgrowne with rust,
Was underneath enveloped with gold;
Whose glistering glosse darkened with filthy dust,
Well yet appeared to have beene of old

A worke of rich entayle and curious mould,
Woven with antickes and wyld ymagery;
And in his lap a masse of coyne he told,
And turned upside downe, to feede his eye
And covetous desire with his huge threasury.

V.

And round about him lay on every side
Great heapes of gold that never could be spent
Of which some were rude owre, not purifide
Of Mulcibers devouring element;
Some others were new driven, and distent
Into great Ingowes and to wedges square;
Some in round plates withouten moniment;
But most were stampt, and in their metal bare
The antique shapes of kings and kesars stroun
rare.

VI.

Soone as he Guyon saw, in great affright
And haste he rose for to remove aside
Those pretious hils from straungers envious si
And downe them poured through an hole full
Into the hollow earth, them there to hide;
But Guyon, lightly to him leaping, stayd
His hand that trembled as one terrifyde;
And though himselfe were at the sight dismay
Yet him perforce restraynd, and to him dou
sayd:

VII.

"What art thou, Man, (if man at all thou art
That here in desert hast thine habitaunce,
And these rich hils of welth doest hide apart
From the worldes eye, and from her right vsay

hereat, with staring eyes fixed askaunce,
ı great disdaine he answerd: "Hardy Elfe,
hat darest vew my direful countenaunce!
read thee rash and heedlesse of thy selfe,
trouble my still seate, and heapes of pretious pelfe.

VIII.

God of the world and worldlings I me call,
reat Mammon, greatest god below the skye,
hat of my plenty poure out unto all,
nd unto none my graces do envÿe:
iches, renowme, and principality,
onour, estate, and all this worldës good,
›r which men swinck and sweat incessantly,
ro me do flow into an ample flood,
. in the hollow earth have their eternall brood.

IX.

Wherefore, if me thou deigne to serve and sew,
t thy commaund lo! all these mountaines bee;
r if to thy great mind, or greedy vew,
ll these may not suffise, there shall to thee
›n times so much be nombred francke and free."
Mammon," said he, "thy godheads vaunt is vaine,
ıd idle offers of thy golden fee;
› them that covet such eye-glutting gaine
ſer thy giftes, and fitter servaunte entertaine.

X.

Me ill besits, that in derdoing armes
nd honours suit my vowed daies do spend,
nto thy *bounteous baytes, and* pleasing charmes,
ith which weake men thou witchest, to attend;

Regard of worldly mucke doth fowly blend,
And low abase the high heroicke spright,
That ioyes for crownes and kingdomes to contend
Faire shields, gay steedes, bright armes, be n
delight;
Those be the riches fit for an advent'rous knight."

XI.

"Vaine glorious Elfe," saide he, "doest not tho
weet,
That money can thy wantes at will supply?
Shields, steeds, and armes, and all things for the
meet,
It can purvay in twinckling of an eye;
And crownes and kingdomes to thee multiply.
Doe not I kings create, and throw the crowne
Sometimes to him that low in dust doth ly,
And him that raignd into his rowme thrust downe,
And whom I lust do heape with glory and renowne?

XII.

"All otherwise," saide he, "I riches read,
And deeme them roote of all disquietnesse;
First got with guile, and then preserv'd with drea
And after spent with pride and lavishnesse,
Leaving behind them griefe and heavinesse:
Infinite mischiefes of them doe arize;
Strife and debate, bloodshed and bitternesse,
Outrageous wrong and hellish covetize,
That noble heart, in great dishonour, doth despize.

XIII.

"Ne thine be Kingdomes, ne the scepters thine;
But realmes and rules thou doest both confound,
And loyall truth to treason doest incline:
Witnesse the guiltlesse blood pourd oft on ground

The crowned often slaine; the slayer cround;
The sacred diademe in peeces rent,
And purple robe gored with many a wound,
Castles surprizd, great cities sackt and brent:
So mak'st thou kings, and gaynest wrongfull government!

XIV.

"Long were to tell the troublous stormes that tosse
The private state, and make the life unsweet:
Who swelling sayles in Caspian sea doth crosse,
And in frayle wood on Adrian gulf doth fleet,
Doth not, I weene, so many evils meet."
Then Mammon wexing wroth: "And why then," sayd,
"Are mortall men so fond and undiscreet
So evill thing to seeke unto their ayd;
And having not, complaine, and having it, upbrayd?"

. . . . . .

XIX.

"Me list not," said the Elfin Knight, "receave
Thing offred, till I know it well be gott;
Ne wote I but thou didst these goods bereave
From rightfull owner by unrighteous lott,
Or that blood-guiltinesse or guile them blott."
"Perdy," quoth he, "yet never eie did vew,
Ne tong did tell, ne hand these handled not;
But safe I have them kept in secret mew
From hevens sight and powre of al which them poursew."

XX.

"What secret place," quoth he, "can safely hold
So huge a masse, and hide from heavens eie?
Or where hast thou *thy wonne*, that so much gold
Thou canst preserve from wrong and robbery?"

"Come thou," quoth he, "and see." So by an
Through that thick covert he him led, and fow
A darksome way, which no man could descry,
That deep descended through the hollow grow
And was with dread and horror compassed arow

XXI.

At length they came into a larger space,
That strecht itselfe into an ample playne;
Through which a beaten broad high way did tr
That streight did lead to Plutoes griesly rayne
By that wayes side there sate infernall Payne,
And fast beside him sat tumultuous Strife;
The one in hand an yron whip did strayne,
The other brandished a bloody knife;
And both did gnash their teeth, and both did th
Life.

XXII.

On th'other side in one consort there sate
Cruell Revenge, and rancorous Despight,
Disloyall Treason, and hart-burning Hate;
But gnawing Gealosy, out of their sight
Sitting alone, his bitter lips did bight;
And trembling Feare still to and fro did fly,
And found no place wher safe he shroud him m
Lamenting Sorrow did in darknes lye;
And Shame his ugly face did hide from living e

XXIII.

And over them sad Horror with grim hew
Did alwaies sore, beating his yron wings;
And after him owles and night-ravens flew,
The hatefull messengers of heavy things,

Of death and dolor telling sad tidings;
Whiles sad Celeno, sitting on a clifte,
A song of bale and bitter sorrow sings,
That hart of flint a sonder could have rifte;
Which having ended, after him she flyeth swifte.

XXIV.

All these before the gates of Pluto lay;
By whom they passing spake unto them nought;
But th' Elfin Knight with wonder all the way
Did feed his eyes, and fild his inner thought.
At last him to a litle dore he brought,
That to the gate of hell, which gaped wide,
Was next adiogning, ne them parted ought:
Betwixt them both was but a litle stride,
That did the house of Richesse from hell-mouth divide.

XXV.

Before the dore sat selfe-consuming Care,
Day and night keeping wary watch and ward,
For feare least Force or Fraud should unaware
Breake in, and spoile the treasure there in gard:
Ne would he suffer Sleepe once thether-ward
Approch, albe his drowsy den were next;
For next to Death is Sleepe to be compard;
Therefore his house is unto his annext:
Here Sleepe, there Richesse, and Hel-gate them both betwext.

XXVI.

So soone as Mammon there arrivd, the dore
To him did open, and affoorded way:
Him followed eke Sir Guyon evermore;
Ne darknesse him, ne daunger might dismay.

Soone as he entred was, the dore streight way
Did shutt, and from behind it forth there lept
An ugly feend, more fowle than dismall day;
The which with monstrous stalke behind him st
And ever as he went dew watch upon him kept.

. . . . . .

XXVIII.

That houses forme within was rude and strong,
Lyke an huge cave hewne out of rocky clifte,
From whose rough vaut the ragged breaches hor
Embost with massy gold of glorious guifte,
And with rich metall loaded every rifte,
That heavy ruine they did seeme to threatt;
And over them Arachne high did lifte
Her cunning web, and spred her subtile nett,
Enwrapped in fowle smoke and clouds more black t
iett.

XXIX.

Both roofe, and floore, and walls, were all of gold
But overgrown with dust and old decay,
And hid in darknes, that none could behold
The hew thereof: for vew of cherefull day
Did never in that house it selfe display,
But a faint shadow of uncertein light;
Such as a lamp, whose life does fade away;
Or as the moone, cloathed with clowdy night,
Does shew to him that walks in feare, and sad affri

XXX.

In all that rowme was nothing to be seene
But huge great yron chests, and coffers strong,
All bard with double bends, that none could weei
Them to efforce by violence or wrong;

On every side they placed were along.
But all the grownd with sculs was scattered
And dead mens bones, which round about were flong;
Whose lives, it seemed, whilome there were shed,
And their vile carcases now left unburied.

XXXI.

They forward passe; ne Guyon yet spoke word,
Till that they came unto an yron dore,
Which to them opened of his owne accord,
And shewd of richesse such exceeding store,
As eie of man did never see before,
Ne ever could within one place be fownd,
Though all the wealth which is, or was of yore,
Could gathered be through all the world arownd,
And that above were added to that under grownd.

XXXII.

The charge thereof unto a covetous spright
Commaunded was, who thereby did attend,
And warily awaited day and night,
From other covetous feends it to defend,
Who it to rob and ransacke did intend.
Then Mammon, turning to that warriour, said:
"Loe, here the worldës blis! loe, here the end,
To which al men doe ayme, rich to be made!
Such grace now to be happy is before thee laid."

XXXIII.

"Certes," said he, "I n' ill thine offred grace,
Ne to be made so happy doe intend!
Another *blis before mine eyes* I place,
Another happines, another end.

To them that list, these base regardes I lend:
But I in armes, and in atchievements brave,
Do rather choose my flitting houres to spend,
And to be lord of those that riches have,
Then them to have myselfe, and be their servile sclave."

XXXIV.

Thereat the Feend his gnashing teeth did grate,
And griev'd, so long to lacke his greedie pray;
For well he weened that so glorious bayte
Would tempt his guest to take thereof assay:
Had he so doen, he had him snatcht away
More light then culver in the faulcons fist:
Eternall God thee save from such decay!
But, whenas Mammon saw his purpose mist,
Him to entrap unwares another way he wist.

[The poet then goes on to tell of the further temptations to which Guyon is subjected, and of how the Knight withstands them. At length, after three days have passed, according to men's reckoning, Guyon begs to be taken back into the world, and Mammon, though loth, is constrained to comply with the request. But as soon as Guyon reaches the vital air he swoons, and lies as one dead. The next *Canto* (which ends with the Knight's recovery and re-union with the Palmer, his appointed guide,) begins with the following stanzas on the care of God for man, thus leading us to anticipate the happy ending.]

(From *Canto* VIII.)

I.

And is there care in heaven? And is there love
In heavenly spirits to these creatures bace,
That may compassion of their evils move?
There is: else much more wretched were the cace

Of men then beasts. But O! th' exceeding grace
Of highest God that loves his creatures so,
And all his workes with mercy doth embrace,
That blessed Angels he sends to and fro,
To serve to wicked man, to serve his wicked foe.

II.

How oft do they their silver bowers leave,
To come to succour us that succour want!
How oft do they with golden pineons cleave
The flitting skyes, like flying Pursuivant,
Against fowle feendes to ayd us militant!
They for us fight, they watch and dewly ward,
And their bright sqadrons round about us plant;
And all for love, and nothing for reward.
O! why should hevenly God to men have such regard?

THE COURTIER

(From *Mother Hubberd's Tale*, 1591)

Most miserable man, whom wicked fate
Hath brought to court, to sue for had ywist,
That few have found, and manie one hath mist!
Full little knowest thou that hast not tride,
What hell it is in suing long to bide:
To loose good dayes, that might be better spent;
To wast long nights in pensive discontent;
To speed to day, to be put back tomorrow;
To feed on hope, to pine with feare and sorrow;
To have thy Princes grace, yet want her Peeres;
To have thy asking, yet waite manie yeeres;
To fret *thy soule with crosses* and with cares;
To eate thy heart through comfortlesse dispaires;

To fawne, to crowche, to waite, to ride, to ronne,
To spend, to give, to want, to be undonne.
Unhappie wight, borne to desastrous end,
That doth his life in so long tendance spend!
Who ever leaves sweete home, where meane estate
In safe assurance, without strife or hate,
Findes all things needfull for contentment meeke,
And will to court for shadowes vaine to seeke,
Or hope to gaine, himselfe will one daie crie,
That curse God send unto mine enemie!

SONNET XL.

(From *Amoretti*, 1595)

Mark when she smiles with amiable cheare,
And tell me whereto can ye lyken it;
When on each eyelid sweetly doe appeare
An hundred Graces as in shade to sit.
Lykest it seemeth, in my simple wit,
Unto the fayre sunshine in somers day;
That, when a dreadfull storm away is flit,
Thrugh the broad world doth spred his goodly ray:
At sight whereof, each bird that sits on spray,
And every beast that to his den was fled,
Comes forth afresh out of their late dismay,
And to thy light lift up their drouping hed.
So my storme-beaten hart likewise is cheared
With that sunshine, when cloudy looks are clea

SONNET LXXV.

(From the same)

One day I wrote her name upon the strand;
But came the waves and washed it away:
Agayne, I wrote it with a second hand;
And came the tyde, and made my paynes his pray

"Vayne man," sayd she, "that doest in vayne assay
A mortall thing so to immortalize;
For I myselve shall lyke to this decay,
And eek my name bee wyped out lykewize."
"Not so" (quod I); "let baser things devize
To dy in dust, but you shall live by fame:
My verse your vertues rare shall eternize,
And in the hevens wryte your glorious name;
Where, when as death shall all the world subdew,
Our love shall live, and later life renew."

John Lyly

1553–1606

APELLES' SONG

(From *Alexander and Campaspe*, 1584; acted 1581)

Cupid and my Campaspe played
At cards for kisses,—Cupid paid;
He stakes his quiver, bow and arrows,
His mother's doves, and team of sparrows:
Loses them too; then down he throws
The coral of his lip, the rose
Growing on 's cheek (but none knows how);
With these the crystal of his brow,
And then the dimple of his chin:
All these did my Campaspe win.
At last he set her both his eyes;
She won, and Cupid blind did rise.
O Love, has she done this to thee?
What shall, alas! become of me?

Robert Greene

1560–1592

CONTENT

(From *Farewell to Folly*, 1591)

Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content,
The quiet mind is richer than a crown,

eet are the nights in careless slumber spent,
The poor estate scorns fortune's angry frown:
ch sweet content, such minds, such sleep, such bliss,
ggars enjoy, when princes oft do miss,

ıe homely house that harbours quiet rest,
The cottage that affords no pride nor care,
ıe mean that grees with country music best,
The sweet consort of mirth and modest fare,
bscurèd life sets down a type of bliss:
mind content both crown and kingdom is.

Christopher Marlowe

1564–1593

THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE

n *The Passionate Pugrim*, 1599, enlarged form in *England's Helicon*, 1600)

Come live with me, and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That valleys, groves, hills and fields,
Woods or steepy mountains yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks,
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses,
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown *made of the* finest wool
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;

Fair-lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy-buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs:
An if these pictures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my love.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love.

Thomas Dekker

Cir. 1570—*cir.* 1637

O SWEET CONTENT

(From *The Patient Grissell*, acted 1599)

Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slùmbers?
O sweet content!
Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplexèd?
O punishment!
Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vexèd
To add to golden numbers, golden numbers?
O sweet content! O sweet O sweet content!
Work apace, apace, apace, apace;
Honest labor bears a lovely face;
Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny!

Canst drink the waters of the crispèd spring?
O sweet content!
Swim'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own tea
O punishment!
Then he that patiently want's burden bears

urden bears, but is a king, a king!
eet content! O sweet O sweet content!
ork apace, apace, apace, apace;
est labor bears a lovely face;
a hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny!

Thomas Heywood

1581 (?)–1640 (?)

GOOD MORROW

rom *The Rape of Lucrece*, 1608 (printed), acted *cir.* 1605)

Pack, clouds, away, and welcome day,
With night we banish sorrow;
Sweet air blow soft, mount lark aloft,
To give my love good-morrow.
Wings from the wind to please her mind,
Notes from the lark I'll borrow;
Bird prune thy wing, nightingale sing,
To give my love good-morrow,
To give my love good-morrow,
Notes from them both I'll borrow.

Wake from thy rest, robin-redbreast,
Sing birds in every furrow;
And from each bill let music shrill
Give my fair love good-morrow.
Blackbird and thrush in every bush,
Stare, linnet, and cock-sparrow,
You pretty elves, amongst yourselves
Sing my fair love good-morrow;
To give my love good-morrow
Sing birds in every furrow.

Thomas Campion

D. 1619 (?)

TO LESBIA

(In Rosseter's *Book of Airs*, 1601)

My sweetest Lesbia, let us live and love,
And though the sager sort our deeds reprove
Let us not weigh them. Heaven's great la
do dive
Into their west, and straight again revive;
But soon as once set is our litle light,
Then must we sleep one ever-during night.

If all would lead their lives in love like me,
Then bloody swords and armour should not b
No drum nor trumpet peaceful sleeps sh
move,
Unless alarm came from the Camp of Love:
But fools do live and waste their little light,
And seek with pain their ever-during night.

When timely death my life and fortunes ends
Let not my hearse be vext with mourn
friends;
But let all lovers, rich in triumph, come
And with sweet pastimes grace my happy tom
And, Lesbia, close up thou my little light
And crown with love my ever-during night.

THE ARMOUR OF INNOCENCE

(From the same)

The man of life upright,
Whose guiltless heart is free

From all dishonest deeds,
  Or thought of vanity;

The man whose silent days
  In harmless joys are spent,
Whom hopes cannot delude
  Nor sorrow discontent:

That man needs neither towers
  Nor armour for defence,
Nor secret vaults to fly
  From thunder's violence:

He only can behold
  With unaffrighted eyes
The horrors of the deep
  And terrors of the skies.

Thus scorning all the cares
  That fate or fortune brings,
He makes the heaven his book;
  His wisdom heavenly things;

Good thoughts his only friends,
  His wealth a well-spent age,
The earth his sober inn
  And quiet pilgrimage.

FORTUNATI NIMIUM

Jack and Joan, they think no ill,
But loving live, and merry still;
Do their week-day's work, and pray
Devoutly on the holy-day:

Skip and trip it on the green,
And help to choose the Summer Queen;
Lash out at a country feast
Their silver penny with the best.

Well can they judge of nappy ale,
And tell at large a winter tale;
Climb up to the apple loft,
And turn the crabs till they be soft.
Tib is all the father's joy,
And little Tom the mother's boy:—
All their pleasure is, Content,
And care, to pay their yearly rent.

Joan can call by name her cows
And deck her windows with green boughs;
She can wreaths and tutties make,
And trim with plums a bridal cake.
Jack knows what brings gain or loss,
And his long flail can stoutly toss:
Makes the hedge which others break,
And ever thinks what he doth speak.

Now, you courtly dames and knights,
That study only strange delights,
Though you scorn the homespun gray,
And revel in your rich array;
Though your tongues dissemble deep
And can your heads from danger keep;
Yet, for all your pomp and train,
Securer lives the silly swain!

John Fletcher

1579–1625

SONG OF THE PRIEST OF PAN

(From *The Faithful Shepherdess*, Act II. sc. 1, acted 1610)

Shepherds all, and maidens fair
Fold your flocks up, for the air
'Gins to thicken, and the sun
Already his great course hath run.
See the dew-drops how they kiss
Every little flower that is;
Hanging on their velvet heads,
Like a rope of crystal beads:
See the heavy clouds low falling,
And bright Hesperus down calling
The dead night from under ground;
At whose rising mists unsound,
Damps and vapours fly apace,
Hovering o'er the wanton face
Of these pastures, where they come
Striking dead both bud and bloom:
Therefore from such danger lock
Every one his lovèd flock;
And let your dogs lie loose without,
Lest the wolf come as a scout
From the mountain, and, ere day,
Bear a lamb or kid away;
Or the crafty thievish fox
Break upon your simple flocks.
To secure yourselves from these
Be not too secure in ease;
Let one eye his watches peep
While *the other eye doth sleep*;
So you shall good shepherds prove,

And for ever hold the love
Of our great god. Sweetest slumbers,
And soft silence, fall in numbers
On your eyelids! So, farewell!
Thus I end my evening's knell.

SONG TO PAN

(From the same, Act. V. sc. 5.)

All ye woods, and trees, and bowers,
All ye virtues and ye powers
That inhabit in the lakes,
In the pleasant springs or brakes,
Move your feet
To our sound,
Whilst we greet
All this ground
With his honour and his name
That defends our flocks from blame.

He is great, and he is just,
He is ever good, and must
Thus be honoured. Daffodillies,
Roses, pinks, and lovèd lilies,
Let us fling
Whilst we sing
Ever holy,
Ever holy,
Ever honoured, ever young!
Thus great Pan is ever sung!

Francis Beaumont

1586 (?)–1616

ON THE LIFE OF MAN

(From *Poems*, 1640)

Like to the falling of a star,
Or as the flights of eagles are,
Or like the fresh spring's gaudy hue,
Or silver drops of morning dew,
Or like the wind that chafes the flood,
Or bubbles which on water stood;
Even such is man, whose borrowed light
Is straight called in and paid to-night.
The wind blows out, the bubble dies,
The spring entombed in autumn lies,
The dew's dried up, the star is shot,
The flight is past, and man forgot.

ON THE TOMBS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

(From *Poems*, 1653)

Mortality, behold and fear!
What a change of flesh is here!
Think how many royal bones
Sleep within this heap of stones;
Here they lie, had realms and lands,
Who now want strength to stir their hands;
Where from their pulpits sealed with dust
They preach, "In greatness is no trust."
Here's an acre sown indeed
With the richest, royall'st seed
That the earth did e'er suck in
Since the first *man died* for sin:
Here the bones of birth have cried,
"Though gods they were, as men they died!"

Here are sands, ignoble things,
Dropt from the ruined sides of kings:
Here's a world of pomp and state,
Buried in dust, once dead by fate.

Sir Henry Wotton

1568–1639

THE CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE

(Written *cir.* 1614)

How happy is he born and taught
  That serveth not another's will;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
  And simple truth his utmost skill;

Whose passions not his masters are;
  Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Untied unto the world by care
  Of public fame or private breath;

Who envies none that chance doth raise,
  Nor vice; who never understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise;
  Nor rules of state, but rules of good;

Who hath his life from rumours freed;
  Whose conscience is his strong retreat;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
  Nor ruin make oppressors great;

Who God doth late and early pray
  More of his grace than gifts to lend;
And entertains the harmless day
  With a religious book or friend.

This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise or fear to fall;
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all.

Sir Walter Raleigh (?)

1552–1618

THE NYMPH'S REPLY TO THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD

(From *England's Helicon*, 1600)

If all the world and Love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pleasures might my passion move,
To live with thee, and be thy love.

But time drives flocks from field to fold,
When rivers rage and rocks grow cold;
And Philomel becometh dumb,
The rest complains of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields
To wayward winter reckoning yields;
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancies spring but sorrows fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies,
Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten,
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and ivy-buds,
Thy coral clasps and amber studs,
All these in *me no* means can move,
To come to thee, and be thy love.

But could youth last, could love still breed,
Had joys no date, had age no need;
Then those delights my mind might move
To live with thee and be thy love.

Ben Jonson

1573–1637

TO THE MEMORY OF MY BELOVED MASTER WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, AND WHAT HE HATH LEFT US

(From First Folio edition of Shakespeare, 1623)

To draw no envy, Shakspeare, on thy name,
Am I thus ample to thy book and fame;
While I confess thy writings to be such,
As neither Man nor Muse can praise too much.
'Tis true, and all men's suffrage. But these way
Were not the paths I meant unto thy praise;
For silliest ignorance on these may light,
Which, when it sounds at best, but echoes right;
Or blind affection, which doth ne'er advance
The truth, but gropes, and urgeth all by chance;
Or crafty malice might pretend this praise,
And think to ruin where it seemed to raise.
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
But thou art proof against them and, indeed,
Above the ill fortune of them, or the need.
I therefore will begin: Soul of the age!
The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage!
My SHAKSPEARE, rise! I will not lodge thee by
Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie
A little further, to make thee a room:
Thou art a monument without a tomb,

Thou art alive still while thy book doth live,
And we have wits to read, and praise to give.
That I not mix thee so my brain excuses,—
I mean with great but disproportioned Muses;
For if I thought my judgment were of years,
I should commit thee surely with thy peers,
And tell how far thou didst our Lyly outshine,
Or sporting Kyd, or Marlowe's mighty line.
And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek,
From thence to honour thee I would not seek
For names, but call forth thund'ring Æschylus,
Euripides, and Sophocles to us,
Pacuvius, Accius, him of Cordova dead,
To life again, to hear thy buskin tread,
And shake a stage; or when thy socks were on,
Leave thee alone for a comparison
Of all that insolent Greece or haughty Rome
Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.
Triumph, my Britain, thou hast one to show,
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not of an age, but for all time!
And all the Muses still were in their prime,
When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm
Our ears, or like a Mercury to charm!
Nature herself was proud of his designs,
And joyed to wear the dressing of his lines,
Which were so richly spun, and woven so fit,
As, since, she will vouchsafe no other wit.
The merry Greek, tart Aristophanes,
Neat Terence, witty Plautus, now not please;
But antiquated and deserted lie,
As they were not of Nature's family.
Yet must I not give Nature all; thy Art,
My gentle Shakspeare, must enjoy a part.
For though the poet's matter nature be,
His art doth give the fashion; and that he

Who casts to write a living line, must sweat
(Such as thine are) and strike the second heat
Upon the Muses' anvil, turn the same,
And himself with it, that he thinks to frame;
Or for the laurel he may gain a scorn;
For a good poet's made, as well as born.
And such wert thou! Look, how the father face
Lives in his issue, even so the race
Of Shakspeare's mind and manners brightl shines
In his well turnèd and true filèd lines,
In each of which he seems to shake a lance,
As brandished at the eyes of ignorance.
Sweet Swan of Avon! what a sight it were
To see thee in our waters yet appear,
And make those flights upon the banks c Thames,
That so did take Eliza and our James!
But stay, I see thee in the hemisphere
Advanced, and made a constellation there!
Shine forth, thou Star of Poets, and with rage
Or influence chide or cheer the drooping stage,
Which, since thy flight from hence, hath mourne like night,
And despairs day but for thy volume's light.

SIMPLEX MUNDITIIS

(From *Epicœne; or, The Silent Woman*, Act I. sc. 1., 1609–10)

Still to be neat, still to be drest,
As you were going to a feast;
Still to be powdered, still perfumed:
Lady, it is to be presumed,
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a look, give me a face,
That makes simplicity a grace;
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free:
Such sweet neglect more taketh me
Than all the adulteries of art;
They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

THE TRIUMPH OF CHARIS

(From "A Celebration of Charis" in *Underwoods*, 1616)

See the chariot at hand here of Love,
Wherein my Lady rideth!
Each that draws is a swan or a dove,
And well the car Love guideth.
As she goes, all hearts do duty
Unto her beauty;
And enamoured do wish, so they might
But enjoy such a sight,
That they still were to run by her side,
Through swords, through seas, whither she would ride.

Do but look on her eyes, they do light
All that Love's world compriseth!
Do but look on her hair, it is bright
As Love's star when it riseth!
Do but mark, her forehead's smoother
Than words that soothe her;
And from her arched brows, such a grace
Sheds itself through the face,
As alone there triumphs to the life
All the gain, all the good of the elements' strife.

Have you seen but a bright lily grow
Before rude hands have touched it?
Have *you marked but* the fall o' the snow
Before the soil hath smutched it?

Have you felt the wool of beaver?
  Or swan's down ever?
Or have smelt o' the bud o' the briar?
  Or the nard in the fire?
Or have tasted the bag of the bee?
  O so white,—O so soft,—O so sweet is she!

SONG.—TO CYNTHIA

(From *Cynthia's Revels*, Act V. sc. 3, 1600)

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep;
Seated in thy silver chair,
State in wonted manner keep:
  Hesperus entreats thy light,
  Goddess excellently bright.

Earth, let not thy envious shade
Dare itself to interpose;
Cynthia's shining orb was made
Heaven to clear, when day did close;
  Bless us then with wished sight,
  Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
And thy crystal-shining quiver;
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe, how short soever:
  Thou that makest a day of night,
  Goddess excellently bright.

William Shakespeare

1564–1616

SILVIA

(From *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, IV. 2, 1598; acted about 1592–93)

Who is Silvia? what is she,
  That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she,
  The heaven such grace did lend her,
That she might admired be.

Is she kind as she is fair?
  For beauty lives with kindness:
Love doth to her eyes repair,
  To help him of his blindness;
And, being help'd, inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing,
  That Silvia is excelling:
She excels each mortal thing,
  Upon the dull earth dwelling:
To her let us garlands bring.

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

(From *As You Like It*, II. 5, acted 1599)

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
  Come hither, come hither, come hither:
  Here shall he see
  No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats
And pleas'd with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

O MISTRESS MINE, WHERE ARE YOU ROA

(From *Twelfth Night*, II. 3, about 1601)

O mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O, stay and hear; your true love's coming,
That can sing both high and low:
Trip no further, pretty sweeting;
Journeys end in lovers' meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'Tis not hereafter:
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

TAKE, OH, TAKE THOSE LIPS AWAY

(From *Measure for Measure*, IV. 1, 1603)

Take, oh take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn;
But my kisses bring again,
bring again.
Seals of love, but seal'd in vain,
seal'd in vain.

HARK, HARK, THE LARK

(From *Cymbeline*, II. 3, 1609)

Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chalic'd flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin to ope their golden eyes;
With everything that pretty is—My lady sweet, arise:
Arise, arise.

DIRGE

(From the same, IV. 2)

Fear no more the heat of the sun
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages:
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' the great,
Thou art past the tyrants' stroke;
Care no more to clothe, and eat;
To thee the reed is as the oak:
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the light'ning flash;
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Fear not slander, censure rash;
Thou hast finished joy and moan:
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

No exorciser harm thee!
Nor no witchcraft charm thee!
Ghost unlaid forbear thee!
Nothing ill come near thee!
Quiet consummation have;
And renowned be thy grave!

A SEA DIRGE

(From *The Tempest*, I. 2, 1610)

Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:
Ding-dong.
Hark! now I hear them—Ding-dong bell.

ARIEL'S SONG

(From the same, Act V. sc. 1)

Where the bee sucks, there suck I:
In a cowslip's bell I lie;
There I couch when owls do cry.
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily.
Merrily, merrily shall I live now
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

ELIZABETHAN SONNETS

Sir Philip Sidney

1554–1586

SONNET XXXI

(From *Astrophel and Stella, cir.* 1591)

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What, may it be that even in heavenly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries?
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eye
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case;
I read it in thy looks, thy languished grace,
To me, that feel the like, thy state descries.
Then ev'n of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
s constant love deemed there but want of wit?
re beauties there as proud as here they be?
› they above love to be loved, and yet
ose lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
they call virtue there ungratefulness?

SONNET XXXIX—ON SLEEP

(From the same)

, Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
aiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
oor *man's wealth, the* prisoner's release,
different judge between the high and low;

With shield of proof, shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw:
O make in me those civil wars to cease;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed;
A chamber deaf of noise, and blind of light;
A rosy garland and a weary head:
And if these things, as being thine in right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

Samuel Daniel

1562–1619

SONNET LI

(From *Delia, Containing certain Sonnets*, 1592)

Care-charmer Sleep, son of the sable Night,
Brother to Death, in silent darkness born:
Relieve my languish and restore the light;
With dark forgetting of my care, return,
And let the day be time enough to mourn
The shipwreck of my ill-adventured youth:
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn
Without the torment of the night's untruth.
Cease dreams, the images of day desires,
To model forth the passions of the morrow;
Never let rising sun approve you liars,
To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow.
Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in vain,
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

Michael Drayton

1563–1631

SONNET LXI

(From *Idea's Mirror*, 1594)

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part,
Nay I have done, you get no more of me;
And I am glad, yea glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free;
Shake hands forever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes:
Now if thou would'st, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover.

William Drummond

1585–1649

ON SLEEP

(From *Poems, Amorous, Funeral*, etc., 1616)

Sleep, Silence' child, sweet father of soft rest,
Prince whose approach peace to all mortals brings,
Indifferent host to shepherds and to kings,
Sole comforter of minds which are oppress'd;
O, by thy charming rod, all breathing things
Lie slumb'ring, with forgetfulness possess'd,
And *yet o'er me to spread* thy drowsy wings
Thou spar'st, alas! who cannot be thy guest.

Since I am thine, O come, but with that face
To inward light, which thou are wont to shew,
With feigned solace ease a true-felt woe;
Or if, deaf god, thou do deny that grace,
Come as thou wilt, and what thou wilt bequeath,
I long to kiss the image of my death.

William Shakespeare

SONNET XXIX

(From *Sonnets*, 1595–1605)

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate:
For thy sweet love rememb'red such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

SONNET XXX

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:

Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

SONNET XXXIII

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all-triumphant splendour on my brow;
But, out, alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region cloud hath mask'd him from me now.
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth.

SONNET LX

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end;
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.
Time *doth transfix the flourish* set on youth
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow,

Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow:
And yet to times in hope my verse shall stand,
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

SONNET LXXIII

That time of year thou may'st in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west;
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourish'd by.
This thou perceivest, which makes thy love mor
strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

SONNET CXVI

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! It is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

John Donne

1573–1631

SONNET X.—ON DEATH

(From *Holy Sonnets*, written before 1607)

ı, be not proud, though some have called thee
:y and dreadful, for thou art not so;
ıose whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
ot, poor Death; nor yet cans't thou kill me.
rest and sleep, which but thy picture be,
pleasure, then from thee much more must flow:
oonest our best men with thee do go,
›f their bones, and souls' delivery.
art slave to Fate, chance, kings, and desperate
men,
lost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
›oppy or charms can make us sleep as well,
›etter than thy stroke; why swell'st thou, then?
hort sleep pass, we wake eternally,
Death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

Michael Drayton

1563–1631

AGINCOURT

TO MY FRIENDS THE CAMBER-BRITONS AND THEIR]

(From *Poems, Lyrics and Pastorals,* 1605 ?)

Fair stood the wind for France,
When we our sails advance,
And now to prove our chance
    Longer not tarry,
But put unto the main,
At Caux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his warlike train,
    Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,
Furnished in warlike sort,
Coming toward Agincourt
    In happy hour,
Skirmishing day by day
With those oppose his way,
Where as the gen'ral lay
    With all his power:

Which in his height of pride,
As Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide
    Unto him sending;

Which he neglects the while,
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile,
Their fall portending;

And, turning to his men,
Quoth famous Henry then,
'Though they to one be ten,
Be not amazèd;
Yet have we well begun,
Battles so bravely won
Ever more to the sun
By fame are raisèd.

'And for myself,' quoth he,
'This my full rest shall be,
England ne'er mourn for me,
Nor more esteem me.
Victor I will remain,
Or on this earth be slain,
Never shall she sustain
Loss to redeem me.

'Poyters and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell,
No less our skill is
Than when our grandsire great,
Claiming the regal seat,
In many a warlike feat
Lopp'd the French lilies.'

The Duke of York so dread,
The eager vaward led;
With the *main Henry* sped,
Amongst his henchmen.

Excester had the rear,
A braver man not there,
And now preparing were
For the false Frenchman,

And ready to be gone,
Armor on armor shone,
Drum unto drum did groan,
To hear was wonder;
That with the cries they make
The very earth did shake,
Trumpet to trumpet spake,
Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham,
Thou did'st the signal frame
Unto the forces;
When from a meadow by,
Like a storm suddenly,
The English archery
Stuck the French horses.

The Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long,
That like to serpents stong,
Piercing the wether;
None from his death now starts,
But playing manly parts,
And like true English hearts
Stuck close together.

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilbows drew,
And on the French they flew:
No man was tardy;

Arms from the shoulders sent,
Scalps to the teeth were rent,
Down the French peasants went,
These were men hardy.

When now that noble king,
His broad sword brandishing,
Into the host did fling,
As to o'erwhelm it;
Who many a deep wound lent,
His arms with blood besprent,
And many a cruel dent
Bruisèd his helmet.

Gloster, that duke so good,
Next of the royal blood,
For famous England stood,
With his brave brother,
Clarence, in steel most bright,
That yet a maiden knight,
Yet in this furious fight
Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford the foes invade,
And cruel slaughter made,
Still as they ran up;
Suffolk his axe did ply,
Beaumont and Willoughby
Bear them right doughtily,
Ferrers and Fanhope.

On happy Crispin day
Fought was this noble fray,
Which fame did not delay
To England to carry;
O when shall Englishmen,
With such acts fill a pen?
Or England breed again
Such a King Harry?

John Donne

1573–1631

AN ELEGY UPON THE DEATH OF THE LADY MARKHAM

(First published 1633)

Man is the world, and death the ocean
To which God gives the lower parts of man.
This sea environs all, and though as yet
God hath set marks and bounds 'twixt us and it,
Yet doth it roar and gnaw, and still pretend
To break our bank, whene'er it takes a friend:
Then our land-waters (tears of passion) vent;
Our waters then above our firmament—
Tears, which our soul doth for her sin let fall,—
Take all a brackish taste, and funeral.
And even those tears, which should wash sin, are
sin.
We, after God, new drown our world again.
Nothing but man of all envenom'd things,
Doth work upon itself with inborn stings.
Tears are false spectacles; we cannot see
Through passion's mist, what we are, or what she
In her this sea of death hath made no breach;
But as the tide doth wash the shining beach,
And leaves embroider'd works upon the sand,
So is her flesh refin'd by Death's cold hand.

As men of China, after an age's stay,
Do take up porcelain, where they buried clay,
So at this grave, her limbec (which refines
The diamonds, rubies, sapphires, pearls and mines,
Of which this flesh was) her soul shall inspire
Flesh of such stuff, as God, when His last fire
Annuls this world, to recompense it, shall
Make and name them th' elixir of this all.
They say the sea, when th' earth it gains, loseth too;
If carnal Death, the younger brother, do
Usurp the body; our soul, which subject is
To th' elder Death by sin, is free by this;
They perish both, when they attempt the just;
For graves our trophies are, and both Death's dust.
So, unobnoxious now, she hath buried both;
For none to death sins, that to sin is loath,
Nor do they die, which are not loath to die;
So she hath this and that virginity.
Grace was in her extremely diligent,
That kept her from sin, yet made her repent.
Of what small spots pure white complains! Alas!
How little poison cracks a crystal glass!
She sinn'd, but just enough to let us see
That God's word must be true,—*all sinners be.*
So much did zeal her conscience rarify,
That extreme truth lack'd little of a lie,
Making omissions acts; laying the touch
Of sin on things, that sometimes may be such.
As Moses' cherubims, whose natures do
Surpass all speed, by him are wingèd too,
So would her soul, already in heaven, seem then
To climb by *tears the common* stairs of men.
How fit she was for God, I am content

To speak, that Death his vain haste may repent;
How fit for us, how even and how sweet,
How good in all her titles, and how meet
To have reform'd this forward heresy,
That women can no parts of friendship be;
How moral, how divine, shall not be told,
Lest they, that hear her virtues, think her old:
And lest we take Death's part, and make him glad
Of such a prey, and to his triumphs add.

A VALEDICTION FORBIDDING MOURNING

(Sometimes called "*Upon Parting from his Mistris*," written, 1612?)

As virtuous men pass mildly away,
And whisper to their souls to go,
Whilst some of their sad friends do say,
'Now his breath goes,' and some say, 'No;'

So let us melt, and make no noise,
No tear-floods, nor sigh-tempests move;
'Twere profanation of our joys,
To tell the laity our love.

Moving of th' earth brings harm and fears,
Men reckon what it did, and meant;
But trepidations of the spheres,
Though greater far, are innocent.

Dull sublunary Lovers' love,
(Whose soul is sense) cannot admit
Absence; for that it doth remove
Those things which elemented it.

But we, by a love so far refin'd
That ourselves know not what it is,
Inter-assurèd of the mind
Careless eyes, lips, and hands, to miss.

Our two souls therefore, which are one,
Though I must go, endure not yet
A breach, but an expansion,
Like gold to airy thinness beat.

If they be two, they are two so
As stiff twin compasses are two;
Thy soul, the fixt foot, makes no show,
To move, but doth if th' other do.

And though it in the centre sit,
Yet when the other far doth roam,
It leans and harkens after it,
And grows erect, as that comes home.

Such wilt thou be to me, who must
Like th' other foot, obliquely run;
Thy firmness makes my circle just,
And makes me end where I begun.

SONG

(From *Poems, with Elegies on the Author's Death*, 1633)

Sweetest Love, I do not go
For weariness of thee,
Nor in hope the world can show
A fitter Love for me;
But since that I
Must die at last, 'tis best
Thus to use myself in jest,
Thus by feignèd death to die.

Yesternight the sun went hence,
And yet is here to-day;
He hath *no desire nor* sense,
Nor half so short a way.

Then fear not me;
But believe that I shall make
Hastier journeys, since I take
More wings and spurs than he.

O how feeble is man's power,
That, if good fortune fall,
Cannot add another hour,
Nor a lost hour recall.
But come bad chance,
And we join to it our strength,
And we teach it art and length,
Itself o'er us t' advance.

When thou sigh'st, thou sigh'st no wind,
But sigh'st my soul away;
When thou weep'st, unkindly kind,
My life's-blood doth decay.
It cannot be
That thou lov'st me as thou say'st,
If in thine my life thou waste
That art the best of me.

Let not thy divining heart
Forethink me any ill;
Destiny may take thy part
And may thy fears fulfil;
But think that we
Are but turned aside to sleep:
They, who one another keep
Alive, ne'er parted be.

A HYMN TO GOD THE FATHER

(First published 1631)

Wilt Thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin, through which I run
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done;
For I have more.

Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sins their door?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two, but wallow'd in, a score?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done;
For I have more.

I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by Thyself, that at my death Thy Son
Shall shine, as He shines now and heretofore:
And having done that, Thou hast done;
I fear no more.

George Herbert

1593–1633

VERTUE

(From *The Temple*, 1631)

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridall of the earth and skie:
The *dew shall weep thy* fall to-night;
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angrie and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie,
My musick shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and vertuous soul,
Like season'd timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

THE PULLEY

(From the same)

When God at first made man,
Having a glasse of blessings standing by,
'Let us,' said He, 'poure on him all we can;
Let the world's riches, which dispersed lie,
Contract into a span.'

So strength first made a way;
Then beautie flow'd, then wisdome, honour, pleasure;
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that, alone of all His treasure,
Rest in the bottome lay.

'For if I should,' said He,
'Bestow this jewell also on My creature,
He would adore My gifts in stead of Me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature:
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessnesse:
Let him be rich and wearie, that at least,
If goodnesse leade him not, yet wearinesse
May tosse him to my breast.'

THE ELIXIR

(From the same)

Teach me, my God and King,
In all things Thee to see,
And what I do in anything
To do it as for Thee:

Not rudely, as a beast,
To runne into an action;
But still to make Thee prepossest,
And give it his perfection.

A man that looks on glasse,
On it may stay his eye;
Or if he pleaseth, through it passe,
And then the heav'n espie.

All may of Thee partake:
Nothing can be so mean,
Which with his tincture 'for Thy sake,'
Will not grow bright and clean.

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgerie divine;
Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws,
Makes that and th' action fine.

This is the famous stone
That turneth all to gold;
For *that which God doth* touch and own
Cannot for lesse be told.

THE COLLAR

(From the same)

I struck the board, and cry'd, 'No more;
I will abroad.'
What, shall I ever sigh and pine?
My lines and life are free; free as the road,
Loose as the winde, as large as store.
Shall I be still in suit?
Have I no harvest but a thorn
To let me bloud and not restore
What I have lost with cordiall fruit?
Sure there was wine,
Before my sighs did drie it; there was corn
Before my tears did drown it;
Is the yeare onely lost to me?
Have I no bayes to crown it,
No flowers, no garlands gay? all blasted,
All wasted?
Not so, my heart; but there is fruit,
And thou hast hands.
Recover all thy sigh-blown age
On double pleasures; leave thy cold dispute
Of what is fit and not; forsake thy cage,
Thy rope of sands
Which pettie thoughts have made; and made to thee
Good cable, to enforce and draw,
And be thy law,
While thou didst wink and wouldst not see.
Away! take heed;
I will abroad.
Call in thy death's-head there, tie up thy fears;
He that forbears
To suit and serve his need
Deserves his load.

But as I raved and grew more fierce and wilde
At every word,
Methought I heard one calling, 'Childe';
And I reply'd, 'My Lord.'

Henry Vaughan

1621–1695

THE RETREATE

(From *Silex Scintillans*, Part I., 1650)

Happy those early dayes, when I
Shin'd in my Angell-infancy!
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy ought
But a white, celestiall thought;
When yet I had not walkt above
A mile or two from my first Love,
And looking back, at that short space,
Could see a glimpse of his bright face;
When on some *gilded Cloud* or *Flowre*
My gazing soul would dwell an houre,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity;
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My conscience with a sinfull sound,
Or had the black art to dispence
A sev'rall sinne to ev'ry sense,
But felt through all this fleshly dresse
Bright *shootes* of everlastingnesse.
O how I long to travell back,
And tread again that ancient track!
That I *might once more* reach that plaine,
Where first I left my glorious traine;

From whence th' inlightened spirit sees
That shady City of Palme trees.
But ah! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way!
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move;
And, when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return.

DEPARTED FRIENDS

(From *Silex Scintillans*, Part II., 1655)

They are all gone into the world of light!
And I alone sit ling'ring here!
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy brest
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is dre
After the Sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory
Whose light doth trample on my days;
My days, which are at best but dull and hoar
Meer glimmerings and decays.

O holy Hope! and high Humility!
High as the Heavens above;
These are your walks, and you have shew'd t
me
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous Death; the Jewel of the Jus
Shining nowhere but in the dark;
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark!

He that hath found some fledg'd bird's nest may know
At first sight if the bird be flown;
But what fair dell or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as Angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted theams
And into glory peep.

If a star were confin'd into a tomb,
Her captive flames must needs burn there;
But when the hand that lockt her up gives room,
She'll shine through all the sphere.

O Father of eternal life, and all
Created glories under thee!
Resume thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty!

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill
My perspective still as they pass;
Or else remove me hence unto that hill
Where I shall need no glass.

George Wither

1588–1667

THE AUTHOR'S RESOLUTION IN A SONNET

(From *Fidelia*, 1615)

Shall I, wasting in despaire
Dye, because a woman's fair?
Or *make pale my cheeks* with care
Cause anothers Rosie are?

Be she fairer than the Day
Or the flowry Meads in May,
If she thinke not well of me,
What care I *how* faire she be?

Shall my seely heart be pin'd
Cause I see a woman kind?
Or a well disposed Nature
Joyned with a lovely feature?
Be she Meeker, Kinder than
Turtle-dove or *Pellican:*
If she be not so to me,
What care I how kind she be?

Shall a woman's Vertues move
Me to perish for her Love?
Or her wel deservings knowne
Make me quite forget mine own?
Be she with that Goodness blest
Which may merit name of best:
If she be not such to me,
What care I how Good she be?

Cause her *Fortune* seems too high
Shall I play the fool and die?
She that beares a Noble mind,
If not outward helpes she find,
Thinks what with them he wold do,
That without them dares her woe.
And unlesse that *Minde* I see
What care I how great she be?

Great, or Good, or Kind, or Faire
I will ne're the more despaire:
If she love me (this beleeve)
I will Die ere she shall grieve.

If she slight me when I woe,
I can scorne and let her goe,
For if she be not for me
What care I for whom she be?

Abraham Cowley

1618–1667

A VOTE

(From *Poetical Blossoms*, second ed., 1636)

This only grant me, that my means may lie
Too low for envy, for contempt too high.
Some honour I would have,
Not from great deeds, but good alone;
The unknown are better than ill known:
Rumour can ope the grave.
Acquaintance I would have, but when 't depends
Not on the number, but the choice of friends.

Books should, not business, entertain the light,
And sleep, as undisturb'd as death, the night.
My house a cottage more
Than palace, and should fitting be
For all my use, no luxury.
My garden painted o'er
With nature's hand, not art's; and pleasures yield,
Horace might envy in his Sabine field.

Thus would I double my life's fading space,
For he that runs it well, twice runs his race.
And in this true delight,
These unbought sports, this happy state,
I would nor fear, nor wish my fate,
But boldly say each night,
To-morrow let *my sun* his beams display,
Or in clouds hide them, I have liv'd to-day.

THE GRASSHOPPER

(From *Miscellanies*, 1650)

Happy Insect what can be
In happiness compar'd to thee?
Fed with nourishment divine,
The dewy morning's gentle wine!
Nature waits upon thee still,
And thy verdant cup does fill.
'Tis fill'd where ever thou dost tread,
Nature selfe's thy Ganimed.
Thou dost drink, and dance, and sing;
Happier than the happiest King!
All the fields which thou dost see,
All the plants belong to thee,
All that summer hours produce,
Fertile made with early juice.
Man for thee does sow and plow;
Farmer he and land-lord thou!
Thou doest innocently joy;
Nor does thy luxury destroy;
The shepherd gladly heareth thee,
More harmonious than he.
Thee country hindes with gladness hear,
Prophet of the ripened year!
Thee Phœbus loves, and does inspire;
Phœbus is himself thy sire.
To thee of all things upon earth,
Life is no longer than thy mirth,
Happy insect, happy thou,
Dost neither age, nor winter know,
But when thou'st drunk, and danced, and su
Thy fill, the flowery leaves among
(Voluptuous, and wise with all,
Epicurean animal!)
Sated with thy summer feast,
Thou retir'st to endless rest.

James Shirley

1596–1667

A DIRGE

(From *The Contention of Ajax and Ulysses*, 1659)

The glories of our blood and state
  Are shadows, not substantial things;
There is no armour against fate;
  Death lays his icy hand on kings:
    Sceptre and crown
    Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
  And plant fresh laurels where they kill;
But their strong nerves at last must yield;
  They tame but one another still:
    Early or late
    They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath,
When they, poor captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow,
  Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
Upon Death's purple altar now
  See, where the victor-victim bleeds:
    Your heads must come
    To the cold tomb,
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in their dust.

Thomas Carew

1589–1639

DISDAIN RETURNED

(Printed, without concluding stanza, in Porter's *Madrigals and Ayres*, 1632)

He that loves a rosy cheek,
Or a coral lip admires;
Or from star-like eyes doth seek
Fuel to maintain his fires,
As old Time makes these decay,
So his flames must waste away.

But a smooth and steadfast mind,
Gentle thoughts and calm desires,
Hearts, with equal love combined,
Kindle never-dying fires;
Where these art not, I despise
Lovely cheeks or lips or eyes.

No tears, Celia, now shall win,
My resolved heart to return;
I have searched thy soul within
And find nought but pride and scorn;
I have learned thy arts, and now
Can disdain as much as thou!

Sir John Suckling

1609–1641

ORSAMES' SONG.

(From *Aglaura*, acted 1637)

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?
Prithee, why so pale?
Will, when looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?
Prithee, why so pale?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner?
Prithee, why so mute?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do't?
Prithee, why so mute?

Quit, quit, for shame, this will not move:
This cannot take her.
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her:
The devil take her!

Richard Lovelace

1618–1658

TO LUCASTA, ON GOING TO THE WARS

(From *Lucasta*, 1649)

Tell me not, sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field,
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you, too, shall adore,—
I could *not love thee, dear*, so much,
Loved I not honour more.

TO ALTHEA FROM PRISON

(From the same)

When Love with unconfined wings
  Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
  To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair,
  And fettered to her eye,
The birds that wanton in the air
  Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
  With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses bound,
  Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep
  When healths and draughts go free,
Fishes that tipple in the deep
  Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets, I
  With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
  And glories of my King;
When I shall voice aloud, how good
  He is, how great should be,
Enlarged winds that curl the flood
  Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
  Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
  That for an hermitage;

If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

Robert Herrick

1591–1674

ARGUMENT TO HESPERIDES

(From *Hesperides*, 1648)

I sing of brooks, of blossoms, birds, and bowers,
Of April, May, of June and July-flowers;
I sing of May-poles, hock-carts, wassails, wakes,
Of bride-grooms, brides, and of their bridal-cakes;
I write of youth, of love, and have access
By these to sing of cleanly wantonness;
I sing of dews, of rains, and, piece by piece
Of balm, of oil, of spice and ambergris;
I sing of times trans-shifting, and I write
How roses first came red and lilies white;
I write of groves, of twilights, and I sing
The Court of Mab, and of the fairy king;
I write of hell; I sing, (and ever shall)
Of heaven, and hope to have it after all.

CORINNA'S GOING A-MAYING

(From the same)

Get up, get up for shame, the blooming morn
Upon her wings presents the god unshorn.
See how Aurora throws her fair
Fresh-quilted colours through the air:
Get *up, sweet slug-a-bed,* and see
The dew bespangling herb and tree.

Each flower has wept and bow'd toward the e
Above an hour since: yet you not dress'd;
Nay! not so much as out of bed?
When all the birds have matins said
And sung their thankful hymns, 'tis sin,
Nay, profanation to keep in,
Whenas a thousand virgins on this day
Spring, sooner than the lark, to fetch in May

Rise and put on your foliage, and be seen
To come forth, like the spring-time, fresh a
green,
And sweet as Flora. Take no care
For jewels for your gown or hair;
Fear not; the leaves will strew
Gems in abundance upon you:
Besides, the childhood of the day has kept,
Against you come, some orient pearls unwept
Come and receive them while the light
Hangs on the dew-locks of the night:
And Titan on the eastern hill
Retires himself, or else stands still
Till you come forth. Wash, dress, be brief
praying:
Few beads are best when once we go a-Mayi

Come, my Corinna, come; and, coming, mark
How each field turns a street, each street a pa
Made green and trimm'd with trees; see how
Devotion gives each house a bough
Or branch: each porch, each door ere this
An ark, a tabernacle is,
Made up of white-thorn neatly interwove;
As if here were those cooler shades of love.
Can such delights be in the street
And open fields and we not see't?

Come, we'll abroad; and let's obey
The proclamation made for May;
And sin no more, as we have done, by staying;
But, my Corinna, come, let's go a-Maying.

There's not a budding boy or girl this day
But is got up, and gone to bring in May.
A deal of youth, ere this, is come
Back, and with white-thorn laden home.
Some have dispatched their cakes and cream,
Before that we have left to dream:
And some have wept, and woo'd, and plighted troth,
And chose their priest, ere we can cast off sloth:
Many a green-gown has been given;
Many a kiss, both odd and even:
Many a glance, too, has been sent
From out the eye, love's firmament;
Many a jest told of the keys betraying
This night, and locks pick'd, yet we're not a-Maying.

Come, let us go while we are in our prime;
And take the harmless folly of the time.
We shall grow old apace, and die
Before we know our liberty.
Our life is short, and our days run
As far away as does the sun:
And, as a vapour or a drop of rain
Once lost, can ne'er be found again,
So when you or I are made
A fable, song, or fleeting shade,
All love, all liking, all delight
Lies drowned with us in endless night.
Then while time serves, and we are but decaying,
Come, *my Corinna, come,* let's go a-Maying.

TO PRIMROSES FILLED WITH MORNING

(From the same)

Why do ye weep, sweet babes? can tears
Speak grief in you,
Who were but born
Just as the modest morn
Teem'd her refreshing dew?
Alas! you have not known that shower
That mars a flower,
Nor felt th' unkind
Breath of a blasting wind,
Nor are ye worn with years,
Or warp'd as we,
Who think it strange to see
Such pretty flowers, like to orphans young,
To speak by tears, before ye have a tongue.

Speak, whimp'ring younglings, and make know
The reason why
Ye droop and weep;
Is it for want of sleep?
Or childish lullaby?
Or that ye have not seen as yet
The violet?
Or brought a kiss
From that sweetheart to this?
No, no, this sorrow shown
By your tears shed
Would have this lecture read:
That things of greatest, so of meanest worth,
Conceiv'd with grief are, and with tears brought

TO THE VIRGINS, TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME

(From the same)

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the Sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may go marry:
For having lost but once your prime
You may forever tarry.

TO DAFFODILS

(From the same)

Fair daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the evensong;
And, *having prayed together*, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or anything.
We die,
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

THE HAG

(From the same)

The hag is astride
This night for to ride,
The devil and she together;
Through thick and through thin,
Now out and then in,
Though ne'er so foul be the weather.

A thorn or a burr
She takes for a spur,
With a lash of a bramble she rides now;
Through brakes and through briars,
O'er ditches and mires,
She follows the spirit that guides now.

No beast for his food
Dare now range the wood,
But hush'd in his lair he lies lurking;
While mischiefs, by these,
On land and on seas,
At noon of night are a-working.

The storm will arise
And trouble the skies;

This night, and more for the wonder,
The ghost from the tomb
Affrighted shall come,
Call'd out by the clap of the thunder.

Edmund Waller

1605–1687

ON A GIRDLE

(From *Poems*, 1645)

That which her slender waist confin'd,
Shall now my joyful temples bind;
No monarch but would give his crown,
His arms might do what this has done.

It was my heaven's extremest sphere,
The pale which held that lovely deer,
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love,
Did all within this circle move.

A narrow compass, and yet there
Dwelt all that's good, and all that's fair:
Give me but what this riband bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round.

SONG

(From the same)

Go, lovely Rose,
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That had'st thou sprung
In deserts where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired;
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die, that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee;
How small a part of time they share,
That are so wondrous sweet and fair.

ON THE FOREGOING DIVINE POEMS

(1686 ?)

When we for age could neither read nor write,
The subject made us able to indite.
The soul, with nobler resolutions deckt,
The body stooping, does herself erect:
No mortal parts are requisite to raise
Her, that unbody'd can her Maker praise.
The seas are quiet when the winds give o'er:
So, calm are we, when passions are no more:
For, then we know how vain it was to boast
Of fleeting things, so certain to be lost.
Clouds of affection from our younger eyes
Conceal that emptiness, which age descries.
The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd
Lets in new light, thro' chinks that time h made:
Stronger by weakness, wiser, men become,
As they draw near to their eternal home.
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view,
That stand upon the threshold of the new.

JOHN MILTON

John Milton

1608–1674

L'ALLEGRO

(1634)

Hence, loathèd Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings;
There, under ebon shades and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In heaven ycleped Euphrosyne,
And by men heart-easing Mirth;
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
To ivy-crownèd Bacchus bore:
Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying,
There, on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,

Filled her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful Jollity,
Quips and cranks and wanton wiles,
Nods and becks and wreathèd smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it, as you go,
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty;
And, if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreprovèd pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And, singing, startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet-briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine;
While the cock, with lively din,
Scatters the rear of darkness thin;
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Some time walking, not unseen,
By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate

Where the great Sun begins his state
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landskip round it measures:
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim, with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide;
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.
Hard by a cottage chimney smokes
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned haycock in the mead.
Sometimes, with secure delight,
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth and many a maid
Dancing in the checkered shade,

And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holyday,
Till the livelong daylight fail:
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How Faery Mab the junkets eat.
She was pinched and pulled, she said;
And he, by Friar's lantern led,
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
That ten day-labourers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubber fiend,
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit or arms, while both contend
To win her grace whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.

And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

IL PENSEROSO

(1634)

Hence, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixèd mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sun-beams,
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But, hail! thou Goddess sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly *visage is too* bright
To hit the sense of human sight,

And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starred Ethiop queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The Sea-Nymphs, and their powers offende
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she; in Saturn's reign
Such mixture was not held a stain.
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove.
Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of cypress lawn
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come; but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast.
And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing;
And add to these retired Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;
But, first and chiefest, with thee bring

Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
The Cherub Contemplation;
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke
Gently o'er the accustomed oak.
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chauntress, oft the woods among
I woo, to hear thy even-song;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way,
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar;
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removèd place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp, at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I *may oft outwatch* the Bear,
With thrice great Hermes, or unsphere

The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook;
And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or underground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine,
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskined stage.
But, O sad Virgin! that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower;
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what love did seek;
Or call up him that left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That owned the virtuous ring and glass,
And of the wondrous horse of brass
On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not tricked and frounced, as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kercheft in a comely cloud,

While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or ushered with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute-drops from off the eaves.
And, when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
To archèd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe with heavèd stroke
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
There, in close covert, by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honied thigh,
That at her flowry work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feathered Sleep.
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings, in airy stream
Of lively portraiture displayed,
Softly on my eyelids laid;
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,
And love the high embowèd roof,
With antique pillars massy-proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow
To the full-voiced quire below,

In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into esctasies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes.
  And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew,
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
  These pleasures, Melancholy, give;
And I with thee will choose to live.

SONG. SWEET ECHO

(From *Comus*, acted 1634)

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st u
      Within thy airy shell,
  By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroidered vale
      Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth we
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
    That likest thy Narcissus are?
      O, if thou have
    Hid them in some flowery cave,
      Tell me but where,
  Sweet Queen of Parley, Daughter
      Sphere!
  So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all heaven
      monies.

SONG. SABRINA FAIR

(From the Same)

Sabrina fair,
Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
Listen for dear honour's sake,
Goddess of the silver lake,
Listen and save!
Listen, and appear to us,
In name of great Oceanus.
By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestic pace;
By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wizard's hook;
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old soothsaying Glaucus' spell;
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands;
By Thetis' tinsel-slippered feet,
And the songs of Sirens sweet;
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks
Sleeking her soft alluring locks;
By all the Nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance;
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answered have.
Listen and save!

LYCIDAS

(1638)

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing ye
Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear
Compels me to disturb your season due;
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
Begin, then, Sisters of the sacred well
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spr
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the strin
Hence with denial vain and coy excuse:
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour *my* destined urn,
And as he passes turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud!
For we were nursed upon the self-same hil
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of n
Oft till the star that rose at evening bright
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westr
wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute

Tempered to the oaten flute,
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.
But, oh! the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn.
The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.
Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.
Ay me! I fondly dream
"Had ye been there," . . . for what could that have done?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?
Alas! what boots it with uncessant care
To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,
And strictly *meditate the* thankless Muse?
Were it not better done, as others use,

To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit dc
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights and live laborious day
But the fair guerdon when we hope to fi
And think to burst out into sudden bla
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorrèc
And slits the thin-spun life. "But
praise,"
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembl
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour
But lives and spreads aloft by those pur
And perfect witness of all-judging Jov
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy
O fountain Arethuse, and thou honou
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned wi
reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mc
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the Herald of the Sea,
That came in Neptune's plea.
He asked the waves, and asked the felon
What hard mishap hath doomed th
swain?
And questioned every gust of rugged w
That blows from off each beakèd promo
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotades their answer brin
That not a blast was from his dungeon
The air was calm, and on the level brin
Sleek Panope with all her sisters playe
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with cu
That sunk so low that sacred head of

Next, Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.
"Ah! who hath reft," quoth he, "my dearest pledge?"
Last came, and last did go,
The Pilot of the Galilean Lake;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain.)
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:—
"How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as, for their bellies' sake,
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reckoning make
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learnt aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw,
Daily devours apace, and nothing said.
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."
Return, Alpheus; the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams; return Sicilian Muse,

And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gush
brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely loo
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honeyed show
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive hea
And every flower that sad embroidery wears;
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies
For so, to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise
Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding s
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great Vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold.
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with rut
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.
Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no mo
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor.
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,

And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves,
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray:
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay.
At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

SONNET

ON HIS HAVING ARRIVED AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE

(1631)

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three-and-twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud nor blossom shew'th.

Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth
That I to manhood am arrived so near;
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.
Yet, be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Towards which Time leads me, and the will of Heave
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

SONNET

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT

(1655)

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshiped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundredfold who, having learnt thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

SONNET

ON HIS BLINDNESS

(From *Poems*, etc., 1673. Written *cir.* 1655 ?)

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide

Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide;
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

SONNET

TO CYRIACK SKINNER

(1st printed in Phillips' *Life of Milton*, 1694. Written *cir.* 1655)

Cyriack, this three years' day these eyes, though clear,
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot;
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied
In Liberty's defence, my noble task,
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.
This thought might lead me through the world's *vain mask*,
Content, though blind, had I no better guide.

Andrew Marvell

1621–1678

THE GARDEN

(Written *cir.* 1650, published first in first collected ed of Marvell's *Poems*, 1681)

How vainly men themselves amaze,
To win the palm, the oak, or bays,
And their incessant labours see
Crowned from some single herb, or tree,
Whose short and narrow-verged shade
Does prudently their toils upbraid,
While all the flowers and trees do close,
To weave the garlands of repose!

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
And Innocence, thy sister dear?
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men.
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow;
Society is all but rude
To this delicious solitude.

No white nor red was ever seen
So amorous as this lovely green.
Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,
Cut in these trees their mistress' name,
Little, alas! they know or heed,
How far these beauties her exceed!
Fair trees! where'er your barks I wound,
No name shall but your own be found.

When we have run our passion's heat,
Love hither makes his best retreat.
The gods, who mortal beauty chase,
Still in a tree did end their race;
Apollo hunted Daphne so,
Only that she might laurel grow;
And Pan did after Syrinx speed,
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.

What wondrous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head;
The luscious clusters of a vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine, and curious peach,
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less,
Withdraws into its happiness;—
The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find;
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas,
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide:
There, like a bird, it sits and sings,
Then whets and claps its silver wings,
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plume the various light.

Such was that happy garden-state,
While man there walked without a mate:
After a place so pure and sweet,
What other help could yet be meet!
But 'twas beyond a mortal's share
To wander solitary there:
Two paradises are in one,
To live in paradise alone.

How well the skilful gardener drew
Of flowers, and herbs, this dial new,
Where, from above, the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run,
And, as it works, the industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we!
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckoned but with herbs and flowers?

PART THIRD

DRYDEN TO THOMSON

Cir. 1660—*Cir.* 1730

John Dryden

1631–1700

MAC-FLECKNOE; OR, A SATIRE ON THE TRUE BLUE PROTESTANT POET, T. S.

(1682)

ALL human things are subject to decay,
And, when fate summons, monarchs must obey.
This Flecknoe found, who, like Augustus, young
Was called to empire, and had governed long;
In prose and verse was owned, without dispute,
Through all the realms of Nonsense, absolute.
This aged prince, now flourishing in peace,
And blest with issue of a large increase,
Worn out with business, did at length debate
To settle the succession of the state;
And, pondering which of all his sons was fit
To reign, and wage immortal war with wit,
Cried, "'Tis resolved! for Nature pleads, that he
Should only rule, who most resembles me.
Shadwell alone my perfect image bears,
Mature in dulness from his tender years;
Shadwell alone, of all my sons, is he,

Who stands confirmed in full stupidity.
The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,
But Shadwell never deviates into sense;
Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
Strike through, and make a lucid interval;
But Shadwell's genuine night admits no ray,
His rising fogs prevail upon the day.
Besides, his goodly fabric fills the eye,
And seems designed for thoughtless majesty;
Thoughtless as monarch oaks, that shade the plain,
And, spread in solemn state, supinely reign.
Heywood and Shirley were but types of thee,
Thou last great prophet of tautology!
Even I, a dunce of more renown than they,
Was sent before but to prepare thy way;
And, coarsely clad in Norwich drugget, came
To teach the nations in thy greater name.
My warbling lute,—the lute I whilom strung,
When to King John of Portugal I sung,—
Was but the prelude to that glorious day,
When thou on silver Thames didst cut thy way,
With well-timed oars, before the royal barge,
Swelled with the pride of thy celestial charge;
And big with hymn, commander of an host,—
The like was ne'er in Epsom blankets tost.
Methinks I see the new Arion sail,
The lute still trembling underneath thy nail.
At thy well-sharpened thumb, from shore to shore,
The trebles squeak for fear, the basses roar;
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
About thy boat the little fishes throng,
As at the morning toast that floats along.
Sometimes, as prince of thy harmonious band,
Thou wield'st thy papers in thy threshing hand;

St. André's feet ne'er kept more equal time,
Not even the feet of thy own Psyche's rhyme:
Though they in number as in sense excel;
So just, so like tautology, they fell,
That, pale with envy, Singleton forswore
The lute and sword, which he in triumph bore,
And vowed he ne'er would act Villerius more."
  Here stopt the good old sire and wept for joy,
In silent raptures of the hopeful boy.
All arguments, but most his plays, persuade,
That for anointed dulness he was made.
  Close to the walls which fair Augusta bind,
(The fair Augusta much to fears inclined),
An ancient fabric raised to inform the sight,
There stood of yore, and Barbican it hight;
A watch-tower once, but now, so fate ordains,
Of all the pile an empty name remains;

. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .

Near it a Nursery erects its head,
Where queens are formed and future heroes bred,
Where unfledged actors learn to laugh and cry,

. . . . . .

And little Maximins the gods defy.
Great Fletcher never treads in buskins here,
Nor greater Jonson dares in socks appear;
But gentle Simkin just reception finds
Amidst this monument of vanished minds;
Pure clinches the suburban muse affords,
And Panton waging harmless war with words.
Here Flecknoe, as a place to fame well known,
Ambitiously designed his Shadwell's throne.
For ancient Decker prophesied long since,
That in this pile should reign a mighty prince,
Born *for a scourge of wit*, and flail of sense;
To whom true dulness should some Psyches owe,

But worlds of Misers from his pen should flow;
Humorists and Hypocrites, it should produce,—
Whole Raymond families, and tribes of Bruce.
Now empress Fame had published the renown
Of Shadwell's coronation through the town.
Roused by report of fame, the nations meet,
From near Bunhill, and distant Watling Street.
No Persian carpets spread the imperial way,
But scattered limbs of mangled poets lay.

. . . . . .
. . . . . .

Much Heywood, Shirley, Ogleby there lay,
But loads of Shadwell almost choked the way;
Bilked stationers for yeomen stood prepared,
And Herringman was captain of the guard.
The hoary prince in majesty appeared,
High on a throne of his own labours reared.
At his right hand our young Ascanius sate,
Rome's other hope, and pillar of the state.
His brows thick fogs, instead of glories, grace,
And lambent dulness played around his face.
As Hannibal did to the altars come,
Sworn by his sire, a mortal foe to Rome,
So Shadwell swore, nor should his vow be vain,
That he till death true dulness would maintain;
And, in his father's right, and realm's defence,
Ne'er to have peace with wit, nor truce with sense.
The king himself the sacred unction made,
As king by office, and as priest by trade.
In his sinister hand, instead of ball,
He placed a mighty mug of potent ale;
"Love's kingdom" to his right he did convey,
At once his sceptre, and his rule of sway;
Whose righteous lore the prince had practised young,
And from whose loins recorded Psyche sprung.

His temples, last, with poppies were o'erspread,
That nodding seemed to consecrate his head.
Just at the point of time, if fame not lie,
On his left hand twelve reverend owls did fly;
So Romulus, 'tis sung, by Tiber's brook,
Presage of sway from twice six vultures took.
The admiring throng loud acclamations make,
And omens of his future empire take.
The sire then shook the honours of his head,
And from his brows damps of oblivion shed
Full on the filial dulness: long he stood,
Repelling from his breast the raging god;
At length burst out in this prophetic mood:—
"Heavens bless my son! from Ireland let him reign,
To far Barbadoes on the western main;
Of his dominion may no end be known,
And greater than his father's be his throne;
Beyond love's kingdom let him stretch his pen!"
He paused, and all the people cried, "Amen."
Then thus continued he: "My son, advance
Still in new impudence, new ignorance.
Success let others teach, learn thou from me
Pangs without birth, and fruitless industry.
Let Virtuosos in five years be writ,
Yet not one thought accuse thy toil of wit.
Let gentle George in triumph tread the stage,
Make Dorimant betray, and Loveit rage;
Let Cully, Cockwood, Fopling, charm the pit,
And in their folly show the writer's wit;
Yet still thy fools shall stand in thy defence,
And justify their author's want of sense.
Let them be all by thy own model made
Of dulness, and desire no foreign aid,
That they to future ages may be known,
Not *copies drawn, but issue* of thy own:
Nay, let thy men of wit too be the same,

All full of thee, and differing but in name,
But let no alien Sedley interpose,
To lard with wit thy hungry Epsom prose.
And when false flowers of rhetoric thou would
cull,
Trust nature; do not labour to be dull,
But write thy best, and top; and, in each line,
Sir Formal's oratory will be thine:
Sir Formal, though unsought, attends thy quil
And does thy northern dedications fill.
Nor let false friends seduce thy mind to fame,
By arrogating Jonson's hostile name;
Let father Flecknoe fire thy mind with praise,
And uncle Ogleby thy envy raise.
Thou art my blood, where Jonson has no part:
What share have we in nature, or in art?
Where did his wit on learning fix a brand,
And rail at arts he did not understand?
Where made he love in Prince Nicander's vein,
Or swept the dust in Psyche's humble strain?

. . . . .
. . . . .

When did his muse from Fletcher scenes purloi
As thou whole Etherege dost transfuse to thine
But so transfused, as oil and waters flow,
His always floats above, thine sinks below.
This is thy province, this thy wondrous way,
New humours to invent for each new play:
This is that boasted bias of thy mind,
By which one way to dulness 'tis inclined;
Which makes thy writings lean on one side stil
And, in all changes, that way bends thy will.
Nor let thy mountain belly make pretence
Of likeness; thine's a tympany of sense.
A tun of man in thy large bulk is writ,
But sure thou art but a kilderkin of wit.
Like mine, thy gentle numbers feebly creep;

Thy tragic muse gives smiles, thy comic sleep.
With whate'er gall thou setst thyself to write,
Thy inoffensive satires never bite;
In thy felonious heart though venom lies,
It does but touch thy Irish pen, and dies.
Thy genius calls thee not to purchase fame
In keen iambics, but mild anagram.
Leave writing plays, and choose for thy command,
Some peaceful province in Acrostic land.
There thou may'st wings display, and altars raise,
And torture one poor word ten thousand ways;
Or, if thou wouldst thy different talents suit,
Set thy own songs, and sing them to thy lute."
He said: but his last words were scarcely heard;
For Bruce and Longvil had a trap prepared,
And down they sent the yet declaiming bard.
Sinking he left his drugget robe behind,
Borne upwards by a subterranean wind.
The mantle fell to the young prophet's part;
With double portion of his father's art.

ACHITOPHEL

(From *Absalom and Achitophel*, 1681)

Of these the false Achitophel was first;
A name to all succeeding ages curst:
For close designs, and crooked counsels fit;
Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit;
Restless, unfixed in principles and place;
In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace;
A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy-body to decay,
And o'er-informed the tenement of clay.
A daring pilot in extremity,
Pleased *with the danger*, when the waves went *high*,

He sought the storms; but for a calm unfit,
Would steer too nigh the sands, to boast his wit.
Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide;
Else, why should he, with wealth and honour blest,
Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?
Punish a body which he could not please;
Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?
And all to leave what with his toil he won,
To that unfeathered two-legged thing, a son;
Got, while his soul did huddled notions try;
And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.
In friendship false, implacable in hate;
Resolved to ruin, or to rule the state.
To compass this the triple bond he broke;
The pillars of the public safety shook;
And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke;
Then, seized with fear, yet still affecting fame,
Usurped a patriot's all-atoning name.
So easy still it proves in factious times,
With public zeal to cancel private crimes.
How safe is treason, and how sacred ill,
Where none can sin against the people's will,
Where crowds can wink, and no offence be known
Since in another's guilt they find their own?
Yet fame deserved no enemy can grudge;
The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge.
In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abbethdin
With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean
Unbribed, unsought, the wretched to redress;
Swift of despatch, and easy of access.
Oh! had he been content to serve the crown,
With virtue only proper to the gown;
Or had the rankness of the soil been freed
From cockle, that oppressed the noble seed;
David for him his tuneful harp had strung,

And heaven had wanted one immortal song.
But wild ambition loves to slide, not stand,
And fortune's ice prefers to virtue's land.
Achitophel, grown weary to possess
A lawful fame, and lazy happiness,
Disdained the golden fruit to gather free,
And lent the crowd his arm to shake the tree.

A SONG FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY, 22ND NOVEMBER. 1687

I.

From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began:
When nature underneath a heap
Of jarring atoms lay,
And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high,
"Arise, ye more than dead."
Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,
In order to their stations leap,
And Music's power obey.
From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began;
From harmony to harmony
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in man.

II.

What passion cannot music raise and quell?
When Jubal struck the chorded shell,
His listening brethren stood around,
And, wonder*ing, on their faces* fell
To worship that celestial sound:

Less than a God they thought there could not dv
Within the hollow of that shell,
That spoke so sweetly, and so well.
What passion cannot music raise and quell?

III.

The trumpet's loud clangour
Excites us to arms,
With shrill notes of anger
And mortal alarms.
The double, double, double beat
Of the thundering drum,
Cries, hark! the foes come:
Charge, charge! 'tis too late to retreat.

IV.

The soft complaining flute,
In dying notes, discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers;
Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling lute.

V.

Sharp violins proclaim
Their jealous pangs and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains, and height of passion,
For the fair, disdainful dame.

VI.

But, oh! what art can teach,
What human voice can reach,
The sacred organ's praise?
Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wend their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above.

VII.

Orpheus could lead the savage race;
And trees unrooted left their place,
Sequacious of the lyre:
But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher;
When to her organ vocal breath was given,
An angel heard, and straight appeared,
Mistaking earth for heaven.

GRAND CHORUS

As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,
And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the blessed above;
So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And Music shall untune the sky.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST, OR THE POWER OF MUSIC: AN ODE IN HONOUR OF ST. CECILIA'S DAY, 1697

I.

'Twas at the royal feast, for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son:
Aloft, in awful state,
The godlike hero sate
On his imperial throne.
His valiant peers were placed around;
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound:
(So should desert in arms be crowned.)
The lovely Thais, by his side,
Sate like *a blooming eastern* bride,
In flower of youth and beauty's pride.

Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

CHORUS

Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

II.

Timotheus, placed on high
Amid the tuneful quire,
With flying fingers touched the lyre:
The trembling notes ascend the sky,
And heavenly joys inspire.
The song began from Jove,
Who left his blissful seats above,
(Such is the power of mighty love.)
A dragon's fiery form belied the god;
Sublime on radiant spires he rode;
When he to fair Olympia pressed,
And while he sought her snowy breast;
Then, round her slender waist he curled,
And stamped an image of himself, a sovereign world.
The listening crowd admire the lofty sound,
A present deity! they shout around;
A present deity! the vaulted roofs rebound.
With ravished ears,
The monarch hears;
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

CHORUS

With ravished ears,
The monarch hears;
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

III.

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung;
Of Bacchus ever fair, and ever young.
The jolly god in triumph comes;
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;
Flushed with a purple grace
He shows his honest face:
Now, give the hautboys breath; he comes, he comes.
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain;
Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

CHORUS

Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

IV.

Soothed with the sound, the king grew vain:
Fought all his battles o'er again;
And thrice *he routed all* his foes, and thrice he slew the *slain.*

The master saw the madness rise,
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
And, while he heaven and earth defied,
Changed his hand, and checked his pride.
He chose a mournful muse,
Soft pity to infuse,
He sung Darius great and good,
By too severe a fate,
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate,
And weltering in his blood:
Deserted, at his utmost need,
By those his former bounty fed;
On the bare earth exposed he lies,
With not a friend to close his eyes.
With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
Revolving, in his altered soul,
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

CHORUS

Revolving, in his altered soul,
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole;
And tears began to flow.

V.

The mighty master smiled, to see
That love was in the next degree;
'Twas but a kindred-sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.
Softly sweet, in Lydian measures,
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures:
War, he sung, is toil and trouble;
Honour, but an empty bubble;

Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying:
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, O think it worth enjoying;
Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
Take the good the gods provide thee—
The many rend the skies with loud applause;
So Love was crowned, but Music won the cause.
The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair,
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again;
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

CHORUS

The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again;
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

VI.

Now strike the golden lyre again;
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.
Break his bands of sleep asunder,
And rouse him, like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark, hark! the horrid sound
Has raised up his head;
As awaked from the dead,
And amazed, he stares around.
Revenge, revenge! Timotheus cries,
See the furies arise;

See the snakes, that they rear,
How they hiss in their hair,
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand!
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain,
And, unburied, remain
Inglorious on the plain:
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew.
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes,
And glittering temples of their hostile gods.—
The princes applaud, with a furious joy,
And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.

CHORUS

And the King seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.

VII.

Thus, long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
While organs yet were mute,
Timotheus, to his breathing flute,
And sounding lyre,
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,

ith nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown;
He raised a mortal to the skies,
She drew an angel down.

GRAND CHORUS

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Inventress of the vocal frame:
e sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
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UNDER MR. MILTON'S PICTURE

Three poets, in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England, did adorn.
The first, in loftiness of thought surpassed;
The next, in majesty; in both the last.
The force of Nature could no further go;
To make a third, she joined the former two.

Matthew Prior

1664–1721

TO A CHILD OF QUALITY FIVE YEARS OI MDCCIV

THE AUTHOR THEN FORTY

(From *Poems on Several Occasions*, 1709)

Lords, knights, and 'squires the numerous
That wear the fair Miss Mary's fetters,
Were summoned by her high command,
To show their passions by their letters.

My pen among the rest I took,
Lest those bright eyes that cannot read
Should dart their kindling fires, and look
The power they have to be obeyed.

Nor quality, nor reputation,
Forbid me yet my flame to tell,
Dear five years old befriends my passion,
And I may write till she can spell.

For, while she makes her silk-worm's beds,
With all the tender things I swear;
Whilst all the house my passion reads,
In papers round her baby's hair;

She may receive and own my flame,
For though the strictest prudes should kn
She'll pass for a most virtuous dame,
And I for an unhappy poet.

Then, too, alas! when she shall tear
The lines some younger rival sends;
She'll give me leave to write, I fear,
And we shall still continue friends.

For, as our different ages move,
'Tis so ordained, (would Fate but mend it!)
That I shall be past making love,
When she begins to comprehend it.

A BETTER ANSWER

Dear Chloe, how blubbered is that pretty face!
Thy cheek all on fire, and thy hair all uncurled:
Prythee quit this caprice; and (as old Falstaff says),
Let us e'en talk a little like folks of this world.

How cans't thou presume, thou hast leave to destroy
The beauties, which Venus but lent to thy keeping?
Those looks were designed to inspire love and joy:
More ordinary eyes may serve people for weeping.

To be vexed at a trifle or two that I writ,
Your judgment at once, and my passion you wrong:
You take that for fact, which will scarce be found wit:
Od's life! must one swear to the truth of a song?

What I speak, my fair Chloe, and what I write, shows
The difference there is betwixt nature and art:
I court others in verse; but I love thee in prose:
And they have my whimsies; but thou hast *my heart*.

The god of us verse-men (you know, Child) sun,
How after his journeys he sets up his rest;
If at morning o'er earth 'tis his fancy to run
At night he reclines on his Thetis's breast

So when I am wearied with wandering all day
To thee, my delight, in the evening I come:
No matter what beauties I saw in my way:
They were but my visits, but thou art my hor

Then finish, dear Chloe, this pastoral war;
And let us like Horace and Lydia agree:
For thou art a girl as much brighter than her,
As he was a poet sublimer than me.

Joseph Addison

1672–1719

ODE

THE SPACIOUS FIRMAMENT

(1712)

I.

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim:
Th' unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display,
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand.

II.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,

And, nightly, to the listening earth,
Repeats the story of her birth:
While all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

III.

What though, in solemn silence, all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball?
What though nor real voice nor sound
Amid their radiant orbs be found?
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
For ever singing as they shine,
"The hand that made us is divine."

John Gay

1688–1732

FABLE XVIII

THE PAINTER WHO PLEASED NOBODY AND EVERYBODY

(From *Fables*, 1727)

Lest men suspect your tale untrue,
Keep probability in view.
The traveller leaping o'er those bounds,
The credit of his book confounds.
Who with his tongue hath armies routed,
Makes ev'n his real courage doubted.
But flattery never seems absurd;
The flatter'd always take your word:
Impossi*bilities seem just:*
They take the strongest praise on trust.

Hyperboles, though ne'er so great,
Will still come short of self-conceit.
So very like a Painter drew,
That every eye the picture knew;
He hit complexion, feature, air,
So just, the life itself was there.
No flattery with his colours laid,
To bloom restor'd the faded maid;
He gave each muscle all its strength;
The mouth, the chin, the nose's length;
His honest pencil touch'd with truth,
And mark'd the date of age and youth.
He lost his friends, his practice fail'd;
Truth should not always be reveal'd;
In dusty piles his pictures lay,
For no one sent the second pay.
Two bustos, fraught with every grace,
A Venus' and Apollo's face,
He plac'd in view; resolv'd to please,
Who ever sat he drew from these,
From these corrected every feature,
And spirited each awkward creature.
All things were set; the hour was come,
His palette ready o'er his thumb;
My Lord appear'd; and, seated right,
In proper attitude and light,
The Painter look'd, he sketch'd the piece,
Then dipt his pencil, talk'd of Greece,
Of Titian's tints, of Guido's air;
'Those eyes, my Lord, the spirit there,
Might well a Raphael's hand require,
To give them all the native fire;
The features, fraught with sense and wit,
You'll grant are very hard to hit;
But yet with patience you shall view,
As much as paint and art can do.'
Observe the work. My Lord replied,

'Till now I thought my mouth was wide;
Besides, my nose is somewhat long;
Dear sir, for me, 'tis far too young!'
'Oh! pardon me, (the artist cried)
In this we Painters must decide.
The piece ev'n common eyes must strike,
I warrant it extremely like.'
My Lord examin'd it a-new;
No looking-glass seem'd half so true.
A lady came, with borrow'd grace,
He from his Venus form'd her face.
Her lover prais'd the Painter's art;
So like the picture in his heart!
To every age some charm he lent;
Ev'n beauties were almost content.
Through all the town his art they prais'd;
His custom grew, his price was rais'd.
Had he the real likeness shown,
Would any man the picture own?
But when thus happily he wrought,
Each found the likeness in his thought.

ON A LAP DOG

Shock's fate I mourn; poor Shock is now no more!
Ye Muses! mourn, ye Chambermaids! deplore.
Unhappy Shock! Yet more unhappy fair,
Doom'd to survive thy joy and only care.
Thy wretched fingers now no more shall deck,
And tie the favorite ribband round his neck;
No more thy hand shall smooth his glossy hair,
And comb the wavings of his pendent ear.
Let cease thy flowing grief, forsaken maid!
All mortal pleasures in a moment fade:
Our *surest hope is in* an hour destroy'd,
And love, best gift of Heaven, not long enjoy'd.

Methinks I see her frantic with despair,
Her streaming eyes, wrung hands, and flow
hair;
Her Mechlin pinners, rent, the floor bestrow
And her torn face gives real signs of woe.
Hence, Superstition! that tormenting guest,
That haunts with fancied fears the coward bre
No dread events upon this fate attend,
Stream eyes no more, no more thy tresses ren
Though certain omens oft forwarn a state,
And dying lions show the monarch's fate,
Why should such fears bid Celia's sorrow ris
For when a lap dog falls, no lover dies.
Cease, Celia, cease; restrain thy flowing te
Some warmer passion will dispel thy cares.
In man you'll find a more substantial bliss,
More grateful toying and a sweeter kiss.
He's dead. Oh! lay him gently in the grou
And may his tomb be by this verse renown'd
Here Shock, the pride of all his kind, is laid,
Who fawn'd like man, but ne'er like man betra

Alexander Pope

1688–1744

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK

(Final version published 1717)

CANTO I.

What dire offence from am'rous causes spring
What mighty contests rise from trivial thing
I sing.—This verse to Caryll, Muse! is due;
This, ev'n Belinda may vouchsafe to view;
Slight is the subject, but not so the praise,
If she inspire, and he approve my lays.

Say what strange motive, goddess! could compel
A well-bred lord t' assault a gentle belle?
O say what stranger cause, yet unexplored,
Could make a gentle belle reject a lord?
In tasks so bold, can little men engage,
And in soft bosoms, dwells such mighty rage?
Sol through white curtains shot a tim'rous ray,
And op'd those eyes that must eclipse the day;
Now lap-dogs give themselves the rousing shake,
And sleepless lovers, just at twelve, awake:
Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knock'd the ground,
And the pressed watch returned a silver sound.
Belinda still her downy pillow pressed,
Her guardian sylph prolonged the balmy rest:
'Twas he had summoned to her silent bed
The morning dream that hovered o'er her head,
A youth more glitt'ring than a birth-night beau,
(That ev'n in slumber caused her cheek to glow)
Seemed to her ear his winning lips to lay,
And thus in whispers said, or seemed to say.
"Fairest of mortals, thou distinguished care
Of thousand bright inhabitants of air!
If e'er one vision touched thy infant thought,
Of all the nurse and all the priest have taught;
Of airy elves by moonlight shadows seen,
The silver token, and the circled green,
Or virgins visited by angel-pow'rs,
With golden crowns and wreaths of heav'nly flow'rs;
Hear and believe! thy own importance know,
Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.
Some secret truths, from learned pride concealed,
To maids alone and children are revealed.
What though no credit doubting wits may give?
The fair and innocent shall still believe.

Know then, unnumbered spirits round thee fly
The light militia of the lower sky:
These, though unseen, are ever on the wing,
Hang o'er the box, and hover round the ring
Think what an equipage thou hast in air,
And view with scorn two pages and a chair.
As now your own, our beings were of old,
And once inclosed in woman's beauteous mould
Thence, by a soft transition, we repair
From earthly vehicles to these of air.
Think not, when woman's transient breath is fled,
That all her vanities at once are dead;
Succeeding vanities she still regards,
And though she plays no more, o'erlooks the cards.
Her joy in gilded chariots, when alive,
And love of ombre, after death survive.
For when the fair in all their pride expire,
To their first elements, their souls retire:
The sprites of fiery termagants in flame
Mount up, and take a salamander's name.
Soft yielding minds to water glide away,
And sip, with nymphs, their elemental tea.
The graver prude sinks downward to a gnome
In search of mischief still on earth to roam.
The light coquettes in sylphs aloft repair,
And sport and flutter in the fields of air.
"Know further yet; whoever fair and chaste
Rejects mankind, is by some sylph embraced:
For spirits, freed from mortal laws, with ease
Assume what sexes and what shapes they please
What guards the purity of melting maids,
In courtly balls, and midnight masquerades,
Safe from the treach'rous friend, the daring spark,
The glance by day, the whisper in the dark.

When kind occasion prompts their warm desires,
When music softens, and when dancing fires?
'Tis but their sylph, the wise celestials know,
Though honour is the word with men below.
Some nymphs there are, too conscious of their face,
For life predestined to the gnomes' embrace.
These swell their prospects and exalt their pride,
When offers are disdained, and love denyed:
Then gay ideas crowd the vacant brain,
While peers, and dukes, and all their sweeping train,
And garters, stars, and coronets appear,
And in soft sounds, 'Your Grace' salutes their ear.
'Tis these that early taint the female soul,
Instruct the eyes of young coquettes to roll,
Teach infant-cheeks a bidden blush to know,
And little hearts to flutter at a beau.
"Oft', when the world imagine women stray,
The sylphs through mystic mazes guide their way;
Through all the giddy circle they pursue,
And old impertinence expel by new.
What tender maid but must a victim fall
To one man's treat, but for another's ball?
When Florio speaks what virgin could withstand,
If gentle Damon did not squeeze her hand?
With varying vanities, from ev'ry part,
They shift the moving toyshop of their heart;
Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots sword-knots strive,
Beaus banish beaus, and coaches coaches drive.
This erring mortals levity may call;
Oh blind to truth! the sylphs contrive it all.
"*Of these am I, who* thy protection claim,

A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name.
Late, as I ranged the crystal wilds of air,
In the clear mirror of thy ruling star
I saw, alas! some dread event impend,
Ere to the main this morning sun descend.
But heaven reveals not what, or how, or whe
Warned by the sylph, oh pious maid, beware
This to disclose is all thy guardian can:
Beware of all, but most beware of man!"
He said; when Shock, who thought she too long,
Leaped up, and waked his mistress witl tongue;
'Twas then, Belinda, if report say true,
Thy eyes first opened on a billet-doux;
Wounds, charms, and ardours, were no s read,
But all the vision vanished from thy head.
And now, unveiled, the toilet stands displ
Each silver vase in mystic order laid.
First, rob'd in white, the nymph intent ado
With head uncover'd, the cosmetic pow'rs.
A heav'nly image in the glass appears,
To that she bends, to that her eyes she rear
Th' inferior priestess, at her altar's side,
Trembling begins the sacred rites of pride.
Unnumbered treasures ope at once, and her
The various off'rings of the world appear;
From each she nicely culls with curious to
And decks the goddess with the glitt'ring
This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
And all Arabia breathes from yonder box,
The tortoise here and elephant unite,
Transformed to combs, the speckled and white.
Here files of pins extend their shining rows
Puffs, powders, patches, Bibles, billets-doux.

Now awful beauty puts on all its arms;
The fair each moment rises in her charms,
Repairs her smiles, awakens ev'ry grace,
And calls forth all the wonders of her face;
Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.
The busy sylphs surround their darling care,
These set the head, and those divide the hair,
Some fold the sleeve, whilst others plait the gown;
And Betty's praised for labors not her own.

CANTO II.

Not with more glories, in th' ethereal plain,
The sun first rises o'er the purpled main,
Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams
Launched on the bosom of the silver Thames.
Fair nymphs, and well-dressed youths around her shone,
But ev'ry eye was fixed on her alone.
On her white breast a sparkling cross she wore,
Which Jews might kiss, and infidels adore.
Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,
Quick as her eyes, and as unfixed as those.
Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,
And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.
Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,
Might hide her faults, if belles had faults to hide;
If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face, and you'll forget 'em all.
This nymph, to the destruction of mankind,
Nourished two locks, which graceful hung behind
In equal curls, *and well* conspired to deck,
With shining ringlets, the smooth iv'ry neck.

Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,
And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.
With hairy springes we the birds betray,
Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey,
Fair tresses man's imperial race insnare,
And beauty draws us with a single hair.
Th' advent'rous baron the bright locks admired;
He saw, he wished, and to the prize aspired.
Resolv'd to win, he meditates the way,
By force to ravish, or by fraud betray;
For when success a lover's toil attends,
Few ask, if fraud or force attained his ends.
For this, ere Phœbus rose, he had implored
Propitious heav'n, and ev'ry pow'r adored,
But chiefly Love—to Love an altar built,
Of twelve vast French romances, neatly gilt.
There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves,
And all the trophies of his former loves;
With tender billets-doux he lights the pyre,
And breathes three am'rous sighs to raise the fir
Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes
Soon to obtain, and long possess the prize:
The pow'rs gave ear, and granted half his pray'
The rest, the winds dispersed in empty air.
But now secure the painted vessel glides,
The sun-beams trembling on the floating tides:
While melting music steals upon the sky,
And softened sounds along the waters die;
Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently pla
Belinda smiled, and all the world was gay.
All but the sylph—with careful thoughts oppressed,
Th' impending woe sat heavy on his breast.
He summons strait his denizens of air;
The lucid squadrons round the sails repair:
Soft o'er the shrouds aërial whispers breathe,

That seemed but zephyrs to the train beneath.
Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,
Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold;
Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight,
Their fluid bodies half dissolv'd in light,
Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,
Thin glitt'ring textures of the filmy dew,
Dipped in the richest tincture of the skies,
Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes;
While ev'ry beam new transient colours flings,
Colours that change whene'er they wave their wings.
Amid the circle, on the gilded mast,
Superior by the head, was Ariel plac'd;
His purple pinions opening to the sun,
He raised his azure wand, and thus begun:
"Ye sylphs and sylphids, to your chief give ear!
Fays, fairies, genii, elves, and demons, hear!
Ye know the spheres and various tasks assigned
By laws eternal to th' aërial kind.
Some in the fields of purest ether play,
And bask and whiten in the blaze of day.
Some guide the course of wandering orbs on high,
Or roll the planets through the boundless sky;
Some less refined, beneath the moon's pale light
Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night,
Or suck the mists in grosser air below,
Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,
Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main,
Or o'er the glebe distil the kindly rain.
Others on earth o'er human race preside,
Watch all their ways, and all their actions guide:
Of these the chief the care of nations own,
And guard with arms divine the British throne.
"Our humbler province is to tend the fair,
Not a less pleasing, though less glorious care;
To save the powder from too rude a gale,

Nor let th' imprisoned essences exhale;
To draw fresh colours from the vernal flow'rs,
To steal from rainbows ere they drop in show'r
A brighter wash to curl their waving hairs,
Assist their blushes, and inspire their airs;
Nay, oft, in dreams, invention we bestow,
To change a flounce, or add a furbelow.
"This day, black omens threat the brightes
fair
That e'er deserved a watchful spirit's care;
Some dire disaster, or by force, or slight;
But what, or where, the fates have wrapped i
night.
Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,
Or some frail China jar receive a flaw;
Or stain her honour, or her new brocade;
Forget her pray'rs, or miss a masquerade;
Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball;
Or whether heav'n has doom'd that Shock must
fall.
Haste, then, ye spirits! to your charge repair:
The flutt'ring fan be Zephyretta's care;
The drops to thee, Brillante, we consign;
And, Momentilla, let the watch be thine;
Do thou, Crispissa, tend her fav'rite lock;
Ariel himself shall be the guard of Shock.
"To fifty chosen Sylphs, of special note,
We trust th' important charge, the petticoat:
. . . . . .
Form a strong line about the silver bound,
And guard the wide circumference around.
"Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,
His post neglects, or leaves the fair at large,
Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his sins
Be stopped in vials, or transfixed with pins;
Or plunged in lakes of bitter washes lie,
Or wedged, whole ages in a bodkin's eye;

Gums and pomatums shall his flight restrain,
While clogged he beats his silken wings in vain;
Or alum styptics with contracting pow'r,
Shrink his thin essence like a rivelled flower;
Or, as Ixion fixed, the wretch shall feel
The giddy motion of the whirling mill,
In fumes of burning chocolate shall glow,
And tremble at the sea that froths below!"
He spoke; the spirits from the sails descend:
Some, orb in orb, around the nymph extend;
Some thrid the mazy ringlets of her hair;
Some hang upon the pendants of her ear;
With beating hearts the dire event they wait,
Anxious, and trembling for the birth of fate.

CANTO III.

Close by those meads, for ever crowned with flow'rs,
Where Thames with pride surveys his rising tow'rs,
There stands a structure of majestic frame,
Which from the neighb'ring Hampton takes its name.
Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom
Of foreign tyrants, and of nymphs at home;
Here thou, great ANNA! whom three realms obey,
Dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes tea.
Hither the heroes and the nymphs resort,
To taste a while the pleasures of a court;
In various talk th' instructive hours they passed,
Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;
One speaks the glory of the British Queen,
And one describes a charming Indian screen;
A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes;
At ev'ry word *a reputation* dies.

Snuff, or the fan, supply each pause of chat,
With singing, laughing, ogling, and all that.
Meanwhile, declining from the noon of day,
The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray;
The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,
And wretches hang that jury-men may dine;
The merchant from th' Exchange returns in peace,
And the long labours of the toilet cease.
Belinda now, whom thirst of fame invites,
Burns to encounter two advent'rous knights,
At ombre singly to decide their doom;
And swells her breast with conquests yet to come
Straight the three bands prepare in arms to join
Each band the number of the sacred nine.
Soon as she spreads her hand, th' aërial guard
Descend, and sit on each important card:
First Ariel perched upon a Matadore,
Then each according to the rank they bore;
For sylphs, yet mindful of their ancient race,
Are, as when women, wondrous fond of place.
Behold four kings in majesty revered,
With hoary whiskers and a forky beard;
And four fair queens whose hands sustain a flow'r,
Th' expressive emblem of their softer pow'r;
Four knaves in garbs succinct, a trusty band;
Caps on their heads, and halberts in their hand
And parti-coloured troops, a shining train,
Draw forth to combat on the velvet plain.
The skilful nymph reviews her force with care:
Let spades be trumps! she said, and trumps they were.
Now move to war her sable Matadores,
In show like leaders of the swarthy Moors.
Spadillio first, unconquerable lord!

Led off two captive trumps, and swept the board.
As many more Manillio forced to yield,
And marched a victor from the verdant field.
Him Basto followed, but his fate more hard
Gained but one trump and one plebeian card.
With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,
The hoary majesty of spades appears,
Puts forth one manly leg, to sight revealed,
The rest his many coloured robe concealed.
The rebel knave, who dares his prince engage,
Proves the just victim of his royal rage.
Ev'n mighty Pam, that kings and queens o'erthrew,
And mowed down armies in the fights of loo,
Sad chance of war! now destitute of aid,
Falls undistinguished by the victor spade!
Thus far both armies to Belinda yield;
Now to the baron fate inclines the field.
His warlike Amazon her host invades,
Th' imperial consort of the crown of spades.
The club's black tyrant first her victim died,
Spite of his haughty mien, and barb'rous pride:
What boots the regal circle on his head,
His giant limbs, in state unwieldy spread;
That long behind he trails his pompous robe,
And of all monarchs only grasps the globe?
The baron now his diamonds pours apace!
Th' embroidered king who shows but half his face,
And his refulgent queen, with pow'rs combined,
Of broken troops, an easy conquest find.
Clubs, diamonds, hearts, in wild disorder seen,
With throngs promiscuous strew the level green.
Thus when dispersed a routed army runs,
Of Asia's troops, and Afric's sable sons,
With like confusion different nations fly,
Of various habit, and of various dye;

The pierced battalions disunited fall,
In heaps on heaps; one fate o'erwhelms them all
The knave of diamonds tries his wily arts,
And wins (oh shameful chance!) the queen o
hearts.
At this, the blood the virgin's cheek forsook,
A livid paleness spreads o'er all her look;
She sees, and trembles at th' approaching ill,
Just in the jaws of ruin, and codille.
And now (as oft in some distempered state)
On one nice trick depends the gen'ral fate:
An ace of hearts steps forth: The king unseen
Lurked in her hand, and mourned his captiv
queen:
He springs to vengeance with an eager pace,
And falls like thunder on the prostrate ace.
The nymph exulting fills with shouts the sky;
The walls, the woods, and long canals reply.
Oh thoughtless mortals! ever blind to fate,
Too soon dejected, and too soon elate.
Sudden these honours shall be snatched away,
And cursed for ever this victorious day.
For lo! the board with cups and spoons i
crowned,
The berries crackle, and the mill turns round;
On shining altars of japan they raise
The silver lamp; the fiery spirits blaze:
From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,
While China's earth receives the smoking tide:
At once they gratify their scent and taste,
And frequent cups prolong the rich repast.
Straight hover round the fair her airy band;
Some, as she sipped, the fuming liquor fanned,
Some o'er her lap their careful plumes displayed
Trembling, and conscious of the rich brocade.
Coffee (which makes the politician wise,
And see through all things with his half-sh
eyes)

Sent up in vapours to the baron's brain
New stratagems, the radiant lock to gain.
Ah cease, rash youth! desist ere 'tis too late,
Fear the just gods, and think of Scylla's fate!
Changed to a bird, and sent to flit in air,
She dearly pays for Nisus' injured hair!
But when to mischief mortals bend their will,
How soon they find fit instruments of ill!
Just then, Clarissa drew with tempting grace
A two-edged weapon from her shining case:
So ladies in romance assist their knight,
Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.
He takes the gift with rev'rence, and extends
The little engine on his fingers' ends;
This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,
As o'er the fragrant steams she bends her head.
Swift to the lock a thousand sprites repair;
A thousand wings, by turns, blow back the hair;
And thrice they twitched the diamond in her ear;
Thrice she looked back, and thrice the foe drew near.
Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought
The close recesses of the virgin's thought;
As on the nosegay in her breast reclined,
He watched th' ideas rising in her mind,
Sudden he viewed in spite of all her art,
An earthly lover lurking at her heart.
Amazed, confused, he found his pow'r expired,
Resigned to fate, and with a sigh retired.
The peer now spreads the glitt'ring forfex wide
T' inclose the lock; now joins it, to divide.
Ev'n then, before the fatal engine closed,
A wretched sylph too fondly interposed;
Fate urged the shears, and cut the sylph in twain,
(But airy substance soon unites again,)
The *meeting points the* sacred hair dissever
From the fair head, for ever, and for ever!

Then flashed the living lightning from eyes,
And screams of horror rend th' affrighted s
Not louder shrieks to pitying heav'n are cast,
When husbands, or when lap-dogs breathe last;
Or when rich China vessels fall'n from high
In glitt'ring dust, and painted fragments lie
"Let wreaths of triumph now my tem twine,"
(The victor cried,) "the glorious prize is m
While fish in streams, or birds delight in ai
Or in a coach and six the British fair,
As long as Atalantis shall be read.
Or the small pillow grace a lady's bed,
While visits shall be paid on solemn days,
When num'rous wax-lights in bright order b
While nymphs take treats, or assignations g
So long my honour, name, and praise shall li
What time would spare, from steel receive date,
And monuments, like men, submit to fate!
Steel could the labour of the gods destroy,
And strike to dust th' imperial tow'rs of Tro
Steel could the works of mortal pride confou
And hew triumphal arches to the ground.
What wonder then, fair nymph! thy hair sh feel
The conqu'ring force of unresisted steel?

CANTO IV.

But anxious cares the pensive nymph oppres
And secret passions laboured in her breast.
Not youthful kings in battle seized alive,
Not scornful virgins who their charms surv

Not ardent lovers robbed of all their bliss,
Not ancient ladies when refused a kiss,
Not tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,
Not Cynthia when her manteau's pinned awry,
E'er felt such rage, resentment, and despair,
As thou, sad virgin! for thy ravished hair.
For, that sad moment, when the sylphs withdrew,
And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,
Umbriel, a dusky, melancholy sprite,
As ever sullied the fair face of light,
Down to the central earth, his proper scene,
Repaired to search the gloomy cave of Spleen.
Swift on his sooty pinions flits the gnome,
And in a vapour reached the dismal dome.
No cheerful breeze this sullen region knows,
The dreaded east is all the wind that blows,
Here in a grotto, sheltered close from air,
And screened in shades from day's detested glare,
She sighs for ever on her pensive bed,
Pain at her side, and Megrim at her head.
Two handmaids wait the throne; alike in place,
But diff'ring far in figure and in face.
Here stood Ill-nature like an ancient maid,
Her wrinkled form in black and white arrayed;
With store of pray'rs, for mornings, nights, and noons,
Her hand is filled; her bosom with lampoons.
There Affectation, with a sickly mien,
Shows in her cheek the roses of eighteen,
Practised to lisp and hang the head aside,
Faints into airs, and languishes with pride,
On the rich quilt sinks with becoming woe,
Wrapt in a gown, for sickness, and for show.
The fair ones feel such maladies as these,
When each *new night-dress* gives a new disease.
A constant vapour o'er the palace flies;

Strange phantoms rising as the mists arise;
Dreadful, as hermit's dreams in haunted shade
Or bright, as visions of expiring maids.
Now glaring fiends, and snakes on rolling spire
Pale spectres, gaping tombs, and purple fires;
Now lakes of liquid gold, Elysian scenes,
And crystal domes, and angels in machines.
Unnumbered throngs on ev'ry side are seen,
Of bodies changed to various forms by Spleen.
Here living tea-pots stand, one arm held out,
One bent; the handle this, and that the spout;
A pipkin there, like Homer's tripod walks;
Here sighs a jar, and there a goose-pye talks;
Men prove with child, as pow'rful fancy works,
And maids turned bottles call aloud for corks.
Safe past the gnome through this fantastic ban
A branch of healing spleenwort in his hand.
Then thus addressed the pow'r—"Hail, waywa
queen!
Who rule the sex to fifty from fifteen;
Parent of vapours and of female wit,
Who give th' hysteric, or poetic fit,
On various tempers act by various ways,
Make some take physic, others scribble plays;
Who cause the proud their visits to delay,
And send the godly in a pet to pray;
A nymph there is, that all thy pow'r disdains,
And thousands more in equal mirth maintains.
But, oh! if e'er thy gnome could spoil a grace,
Or raise a pimple on a beauteous face,
Like citron-waters matrons' cheeks inflame,
Or change complexions at a losing game;

. . . . . .

Or caus'd suspicion when no soul was rude,
Or discompos'd the head-dress of a prude,
Or e'er to costive lapdog gave disease,
Which not the tears of brightest eyes could eas

Hear me, and touch Belinda with chagrin,
That single act gives half the world the spleen."
The goddess with a discontented air
Seems to reject him, though she grants his pray'r.
A wond'rous bag with both her hands she binds,
Like that where once Ulysses held the winds;
There she collects the force of female lungs,
Sighs, sobs, and passions, and the war of tongues,
A phial next she fills with fainting fears,
Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears.
The gnome rejoicing bears her gifts away,
Spreads his black wings, and slowly mounts to day.
Sunk in Thalestris' arms the nymph he found.
Her eyes dejected, and her hair unbound.
Full o'er their heads the swelling bag he rent,
And all the furies issued at the vent.
Belinda burns with more than mortal ire,
And fierce Thalestris fans the rising fire.
"O wretched maid!" she spread her hands, and cried,
(While Hampton's echoes "Wretched maid!" replied,)
"Was it for this you took such constant care
The bodkin, comb, and essence to prepare?
For this your locks in paper durance bound?
For this with tort'ring irons wreathed around?
For this with fillets strained your tender head,
And bravely bore the double loads of lead?
Gods! shall the ravisher display your hair,
While the fops envy, and the ladies stare!
Honour forbid! at whose unrivalled shrine
Ease, pleasure, virtue, all our sex resign.
Methinks already I your tears survey,
Already hear the horrid things they say,
Already see you a degraded toast,
And all your honour in a whisper lost!

How shall I, then, your helpless fame defend?
'Twill then be infamy to seem your friend!
And shall this prize, th' inestimable prize,
Exposed through crystal to the gazing eyes,
And heightened by the diamond's circling rays,
On that rapacious hand for ever blaze?
Sooner shall grass in Hyde Park Circus grow,
And wits take lodgings in the sound of Bow;
Sooner let earth, air, sea, to chaos fall,
Men, monkeys, lap-dogs, parrots, perish all!"
She said; then raging to Sir Plume repairs,
And bids her beau demand the precious hairs:
(Sir Plume, of amber snuff-box justly vain,
And the nice conduct of a clouded cane)
With earnest eyes, and round unthinking face,
He first the snuff-box opened, then the case,
And thus broke out—"My Lord, why, what the devil!
Zounds! damn the lock! 'fore Gad, you must be civil.
Plague on 't! 'tis past a jest—nay prithee, pox!
Give her the hair"—he spoke, and rapped his box.
"It grieves me much," replied the peer again,
"Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain,
But by this lock, this sacred lock I swear,
(Which never more shall join its parted hair;
Which never more its honours shall renew,
Clipped from the lovely head where late it grew)
That, while my nostrils draw the vital air,
This hand, which won it, shall for ever wear."
He spoke, and speaking, in proud triumph spread
The long-contended honours of her head.
But Umbriel, hateful gnome! forbears not so;
He breaks the phial whence the sorrows flow.
Then see! the nymph in beauteous grief appears,
Her eyes half-languishing, half-drowned in tears;
On her heaved bosom hung her drooping head,

Which, with a sigh, she raised; and thus she said.
"For ever cursed be this detested day,
Which snatched my best, my fav'rite curl away!
Happy! ah ten times happy had I been,
If Hampton-Court these eyes had never seen!
Yet am not I the first mistaken maid,
By love of courts to num'rous ills betrayed.
Oh had I rather unadmired remained
In some lone isle, or distant northern land,
Where the gilt chariot never marks the way,
Where none learn ombre, none e'er taste bohea!
There kept my charms concealed from mortal eye,
Like roses, that in deserts bloom and die.
What moved my mind with youthful lords to roam?
Oh had I stayed, and said my pray'rs at home!
'Twas this, the morning omens seemed to tell,
Thrice from my trembling hand the patch-box fell;
The tott'ring china shook without a wind,
Nay, Poll sat mute, and Shock was most unkind!
A sylph too warned me of the threats of fate,
In mystic visions, now believed too late!
See the poor remnants of these slighted hairs!
My hands shall rend what ev'n thy rapine spares:
These in two sable ringlets taught to break,
Once gave new beauties to the snowy neck;
The sister-lock now sits uncouth, alone,
And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;
Uncurled it hangs, the fatal shears demands,
And tempts, once more, thy sacrilegious hands.
Oh hadst thou, cruel! been content to seize
Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these!"

CANTO V.

She said: the pitying audience melt in tears,
But fate and Jove had stopped the baron's ears.
In vain Thalestris with reproach assails,
For who can move when fair Belinda fails?
Not half so fixed the Trojan could remain,
While Anna begged and Dido raged in vain.
Then grave Clarissa graceful waved her fan;
Silence ensued, and thus the nymph began:
"Say, why are beauties praised and honoured most,
The wise man's passion, and the vain man's toast?
Why decked with all that land and sea afford,
Why angels called, and angel-like adored?
Why round our coaches crowd the white-gloved beaux,
Why bows the side-box from its inmost rows?
How vain are all these glories, all our pains,
Unless good sense preserve what beauty gains;
That men may say, when we the front box grace,
Behold the first in virtue as in face!
Oh! if to dance all night, and dress all day,
Charmed the small-pox, or chased old age away;
Who would not scorn what housewife's cares produce,
Or who would learn one earthly thing of use?
To patch, nay ogle, might become a saint,
Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint.
But since, alas! frail beauty must decay,
Curled or uncurled, since locks will turn to gray;
Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,
And she who scorns a man, must die a maid;
What then remains but well our pow'r to use,
And keep good-humour, still whate'er we lose?
And trust me, dear! good-humour can prevail,
When airs, and flights, and screams, and scolding fail.

Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll;
Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul."
So spoke the dame, but no applause ensued;
Belinda frowned, Thalestris called her prude.
"To arms, to arms!" the fierce virago cries,
And swift as lightning to the combat flies.
All side in parties, and begin th' attack;
Fans clap, silks rustle, and tough whalebones crack;
Heroes' and heroines' shouts confus'dly rise,
And base and treble voices strike the skies.
No common weapons in their hands are found,
Like gods they fight, nor dread a mortal wound.
So when bold Homer makes the gods engage,
And heav'nly breasts with human passions rage;
'Gainst Pallas, Mars; Latona, Hermes arms;
And all Olympus rings with loud alarms:
Jove's thunder roars, heav'n trembles all around,
Blue Neptune storms, the bellowing deeps resound:
Earth shakes her nodding tow'rs, the ground gives way,
And the pale ghosts start at the flash of day!
Triumphant Umbriel on a sconce's height
Clapped his glad wings, and sate to view the fight.
Propped on their bodkin spears, the sprites survey
The growing combat, or assist the fray.
While through the press enraged Thalestris flies,
And scatters death around from both her eyes,
A beau and witling perished in the throng,
One died in metaphor, and one in song.
"O cruel nymph! a living death I bear,"
Cried Dapperwit, and sunk beside his chair.
A mournful glance Sir Fopling upward cast,
"*Those eyes are made* so killing"—was his last.

Thus on Meander's flow'ry margin lies
Th' expiring swan, and as he sings he di
When bold Sir Plume had drawn down,
Chloe stepped in, and killed him with a f
She smiled to see the doughty hero slain,
But, at her smile, the beau revived again.
Now Jove suspends his golden scales in
Weighs the men's wits against the lady's
The doubtful beam long nods from side to
At length the wits mount up, the hairs s
See fierce Belinda on the baron flies,
With more than usual lightning in her e
Nor fear'd the chief th' unequal fight to t
Who sought no more than on his foe to d
But this bold lord with manly strength
She with one finger and a thumb subduec
Just where the breath of life his nostrils
A charge of snuff the wily virgin threw;
The gnomes direct, to ev'ry atom just,
The pungent grains of titillating dust.
Sudden, with starting tears each eye o'er
And the high dome re-echoes to his nose.
"Now meet thy fate," incensed Belinda
And drew a deadly bodkin from her side.
(The same, his ancient personage to deck,
Her great-great-grandsire wore about his
In three seal-rings; which after, melted d
Formed a vast buckle for his widow's g
Her infant grandame's whistle next it gre
The bells she jingled, and the whistle ble
Then in a bodkin graced her mother's hai
Which long she wore, and now Belinda w
"Boast not my fall," he cried, "insultir
Thou by some other shalt be laid as low:
Nor think, to die dejects my lofty mind;
All that I dread is leaving you behind!

Rather than so, ah let me still survive,
And burn in Cupid's flames—but burn alive."
"Restore the lock!" she cries; and all around
"Restore the lock!" the vaulted roofs rebound
Not fierce Othello in so loud a strain
Roared for the handkerchief that caused his pain.
But see how oft' ambitious aims are crossed,
And chiefs contend till all the prize is lost!
The lock, obtained with guilt, and kept with pain,
In ev'ry place is sought, but sought in vain:
With such a prize no mortal must be blest,
So heav'n decrees: with heav'n who can contest?
Some thought it mounted to the lunar sphere,
Since all things lost on earth are treasured there.
There heroes' wits are kept in pond'rous vases,
And beaus' in snuff-boxes and tweezer-cases.
There broken vows, and death-bed alms are found,
And lovers' hearts with ends of ribbon bound,
The courtier's promises, and sick man's pray'rs,
The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs,
Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,
Dried butterflies, and tomes of casuistry.
But trust the Muse—she saw it upward rise,
Tho' mark'd by none but quick, poetic eyes:
(So Rome's great founder to the heav'ns withdrew,
To Proculus alone confessed in view)
A sudden star, it shot through liquid air,
And drew behind a radiant trail of hair.
Not Berenice's locks first rose so bright,
The heav'ns bespangling with disheveled light.
The sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,
And pleased pursue its progress through the skies.
This the beau monde shall from the Mall survey,
And hail *with music its* propitious ray;
This the bless'd lover shall for Venus take,

And send up vows from Rosamonda's lake;
This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless sk
When next he looks through Galileo's eyes;
And hence th' egregious wizard shall foredoo
The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome.
Then cease, bright nymph! to mourn thy r
ished hair,
Which adds new glory to the shining sphere!
Not all the tresses that fair head can boast,
Shall draw such envy as the Lock you lost.
For after all the murders of your eye,
When, after millions slain, yourself shall die;
When those fair suns shall set, as set they m
And all those tresses shall be laid in dust,
This lock the Muse shall consecrate to fame,
And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name.

ELEGY TO THE MEMORY OF AN UNFORTU NATE LADY.

(1717)

What beck'ning ghost, along the moon-light sh
Invites my steps, and points to yonder glade?
'Tis she!—but why that bleeding bosom gored
Why dimly gleams the visionary sword?
Oh ever beauteous, ever friendly! tell,
Is it, in heav'n, a crime to love too well?
To bear too tender, or too firm a heart,
To act a lover's or a Roman's part?
Is there no bright reversion in the sky,
For those who greatly think, or bravely die?
Why bade ye else, ye pow'rs! her soul aspire
Above the vulgar flight of low desire?
Ambition first sprung from your blessed abod
The glorious fault of angels and of gods:
Thence to their images on earth it flows,
And in the breasts of kings and heroes glow.

Most souls, 'tis true, but peep out once an age,
Dull sullen pris'ners in the body's cage:
Dim lights of life, that burn a length of years
Useless, unseen, as lamps in sepulchres;
Like Eastern kings a lazy state they keep,
And, close confined to their own palace, sleep.
From these perhaps (ere nature bade her die)
Fate snatched her early to the pitying sky.
As into air the purer spirits flow,
And sep'rate from their kindred dregs below;
So flew the soul to its congenial place,
Nor left one virtue to redeem her race.
But thou, false guardian of a charge too good,
Thou mean deserter of thy brother's blood!
See on these ruby lips the trembling breath,
These cheeks now fading at the blast of death;
Cold is that breast which warmed the world before,
And those love-darting eyes must roll no more.
Thus, if eternal justice rules the ball,
Thus shall your wives, and thus your children fall:
On all the line a sudden vengeance waits,
And frequent hearses shall besiege your gates;
Their passengers shall stand, and pointing say,
(While the long fun'rals blacken all the way)
"Lo! these were they, whose souls the furies steeled,
"And cursed with hearts unknowing how to yield."
Thus unlamented passed the proud away,
The gaze of fools, and pageant of a day!
So perish all, whose breast ne'er learned to glow
For others' good, or melt at others' woe.
What can atone, oh ever-injured shade!
Thy fate unpitied, and thy rites unpaid?
No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear

Pleased thy pale ghost, or graced thy mou
bier.
By foreign hands thy dying eyes were closed
By foreign hands thy decent limbs compose
By foreign hands thy humble grave adorne
By strangers honoured and by strangers mou
What though no friends in sable weeds appe
Grieve for an hour, perhaps, then mourn a y
And bear about the mockery of woe
To midnight dances, and the public show?
What though no weeping loves thy ashes gra
Nor polished marble emulate thy face?
What though no sacred earth allow thee roo
Nor hallowed dirge be muttered o'er thy tom
Yet shall thy grave with rising flowers be dre
And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast:
There shall the morn her earliest tears bestow
There the first roses of the year shall blow;
While angels with their silver wings o'ershad
The ground, now sacred by thy reliques ma
So peaceful rests, without a stone, a nam
What once had beauty, titles, wealth, and fa
How loved, how honoured once, avails thee n
To whom related, or by whom begot;
A heap of dust alone remains of thee;
'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be!
Poets themselves must fall like those they s
Deaf the praised ear, and mute the tu
tongue.
Even he, whose soul now melts in mournful
Shall shortly want the gen'rous tear he pays
Then from his closing eyes thy form shall pa
And the last pang shall tear thee from his h
Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er,
The muse forgot, and thou beloved no more!

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

(Published 1738)

Father of all! in ev'ry age,
In ev'ry clime adored,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

Thou Great First Cause, least understood!
Who all my sense confined
To know but this, that Thou art good,
And that myself am blind;

Yet gave me in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill:
And binding nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.

What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This teach me more than hell to shun,
That, more than heav'n pursue.

What blessings thy free bounty gives
Let me not cast away;
For God is paid when man receives:
T' enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think Thee Lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round:

Let not this weak, unknowing hand
Presume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land
On each I judge thy foe.

If I am right, thy grace impart
Still in the right to stay:
If I am wrong, oh teach my heart
To find that better way.

Save me alike from foolish pride,
Or impious discontent,
At aught thy wisdom has denied,
Or aught thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

Mean though I am, not wholly so,
Since quickened by thy breath:
Oh lead me wheresoe'er I go,
Through this day's life or death.

This day be bread and peace my lot:
All else beneath the sun,
Thou know'st if best bestowed or not,
And let thy will be done.

To Thee, whose temple is all space,
Whose altar, earth, sea, skies,
One chorus let all being raise;
All nature's incense rise!

EPISTLE TO DR. ARBUTHNOT

BEING THE PROLOGUE TO THE SATIRES

(Published 1735)

P. Shut, shut the door, good John! fatigued I sa
Tie up the knocker, say I'm sick, I'm dead.
The Dog-star rages! nay, 'tis past a doubt,
All Bedlam, or Parnassus is let out:

Fire in each eye, and papers in each hand,
They rave, recite, and madden round the land.
What walls can guard me, or what shades can hide?
They pierce my thickets, through my grot they glide,
By land, by water, they renew the charge,
They stop the chariot, and they board the barge.
No place is sacred, not the church is free,
Ev'n Sunday shines no Sabbath-day to me:
Then from the Mint walks forth the man of rhyme,
Happy! to catch me, just at dinner-time.
Is there a parson, much be-mus'd in beer,
A maudlin poetess, a rhyming peer;
A clerk, foredoomed his father's soul to cross,
Who pens a stanza, when he should engross?
Is there, who, locked from ink and paper, scrawls
With desperate charcoal round his darkened walls?
All fly to Twit'nam, and in humble strain
Apply to me, to keep them mad or vain.
Arthur, whose giddy son neglects the laws,
Imputes to me and my damned works the cause:
Poor Cornus sees his frantic wife elope,
And curses wit, and poetry, and Pope.
Friend to my life! (which did not you prolong,
The world had wanted many an idle song),
What drop or nostrum can this plague remove?
Or which must end me, a fool's wrath or love?
A dire dilemma! either way I'm sped,
If foes, they write, if friends, they read me dead.
Seized and tied down to judge, how wretched I!
Who can't be silent, and who will not lie:
To laugh, were want of goodness and of grace,
And to be grave, exceeds all power of face.
I sit with sad civility, I read

With honest anguish, and an aching head;
And drop at last, but in unwilling ears,
This saving counsel—"Keep your piece
years."
"Nine years!" cries he, who, high in D
Lane,
Lulled by soft zephyrs through the broken p
Rhymes ere he wakes, and prints before
ends,
Obliged by hunger and request of friends:
"The piece you think is incorrect? why tak
I'm all submission; what you'd have it, mak
Three things another's modest wishes bou
My friendship, and a prologue, and ten pou
Pitholeon sends to me: "You know his g
I want a patron; ask him for a place."
Pitholeon libelled me—"but here's a letter
Informs you, sir, 'twas when he knew no bett
Dare you refuse him? Curll invites to din
He'll write a journal, or he'll turn divine."
Bless me! a packet. "'Tis a stranger sue
A virgin tragedy, an orphan Muse."
If I dislike it, "Furies, death, and rage!"
If I approve, "Commend it to the stage."
There (thank my stars) my whole commi
ends,
The players and I are, luckily, no friends.
Fired that the house reject him, "'Sdeath
print it,
And shame the fools—your interest, sir,
Lintot."
Lintot, dull rogue, will think your price
much:
"Not, sir, if you revise it, and retouch."
All my demurs but double his attacks:
At last he whispers, "Do; and we go snacks."
Glad of a quarrel, straight I clap the door,

"Sir, let me see your works and you no more."

. . . . . .

One dedicates in high heroic prose,
And ridicules beyond a hundred foes:
One from all Grubstreet will my fame defend,
And, more abusive, calls himself my friend.
This prints my letters, that expects a bribe,
And others roar aloud, "Subscribe, subscribe!"
There are who to my person pay their court:
I cough like Horace, and, though lean, am short.
Ammon's great son one shoulder had too high,—
Such Ovid's nose,—and, "sir, you have an eye."
Go on, obliging creatures, make me see
All that disgraced my betters met in me.
Say, for my comfort, languishing in bed,
"Just so immortal Maro held his head:"
And, when I die, be sure you let me know
Great Homer died three thousand years ago.
Why did I write? what sin to me unknown
Dipped me in ink, my parents', or my own?
As yet a child, nor yet a fool to fame,
I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came.
I left no calling for this idle trade,
No duty broke, no father disobeyed:
The muse but served to ease some friend, not wife,
To help me through this long disease, my life;
To second, Arbuthnot! thy art and care,
And teach the being you preserved to bear.

. . . . . .

Soft were my numbers; who could take offence
While pure description held the place of sense?

. . . . . .

Did some more sober critic come abroad—
If wrong, I smiled; if right, I kissed the rod.
Pains, reading, study, are their just pretence,
And all they want is spirit, taste, and sense.
Commas and points they set exactly right,

And 't were a sin to rob them of their mite.

. . . . . .

Were others angry—I excused them too;
Well might they rage, I gave them but their d
A man's true merit 'tis not hard to find;
But each man's secret standard in his mind,
That casting-weight pride adds to emptiness,
This, who can gratify, for who can guess?
The bard whom pilfered Pastorals renown,
Who turns a Persian tale for half-a-crown,
Just writes to make his barrenness appear,
And strains from hard-bound brains, eight li
a-year;
He, who still wanting, though he lives on thef
Steals much, spends little, yet has nothing lef
And he, who now to sense, now nonsense leani
Means not, but blunders round about a meanir
And he, whose fustian's so sublimely bad,
It is not poetry but prose run mad:
All these, my modest satire bade translate,
And owned that nine such poets made a Tate
How did they fume, and stamp, and roar, a
chafe!
And swear, not Addison himself was safe.
Peace to all such! but were there one wh
fires
True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires;
Blest with each talent, and each art to please,
And born to write, converse, and live with ease
Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the thron
View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
And hate for arts that caused himself to rise;
Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer;
Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,
Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike,

/

Alike reserved to blame, or to commend,
A timorous foe, and a suspicious friend;
Dreading e'en fools, by flatterers besieged,
And so obliging, that he ne'er obliged;
Like Cato, give his little senate laws,
And sit attentive to his own applause;
While wits and templars every sentence raise,
And wonder with a foolish face of praise—
Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?
Who would not weep, if Atticus were he?

. . . . . .

PART FOURTH

THOMSON TO TENNYSON

Cir. 1730–*Cir.* 1830

James Thomson

1700–1748

SPRING

(1728)

(From *The Seasons*)

Come, gentle Spring, etherial mildness, come,
And from the bosom of yon dropping cloud,
While music wakes around, veil'd in a shower
Of shadowing roses, on our plains descend.

. . . . . .

And see where surly Winter passes off,
Far to the north, and calls his ruffian blasts:
His blasts obey, and quit the howling hill,
The shatter'd forest, and the ravag'd vale;
While softer gales succeed, at whose kind touch,
Dissolving snows in livid torrents lost,
The mountains lift their green heads to the sky.
As yet the trembling year is unconfirm'd,
And Winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,
Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving sleets
Deform the day *delightless*; so that scarce
The bittern knows his time, with bill engulf'd

To shake the sounding marsh; or from t
The plovers when to scatter o'er the hea
And sing their wild notes to the listenir
At last from Aries rolls the bounteous S
And the bright Bull receives him. Then
Th' expansive atmosphere is cramp'd wit
But, full of life and vivifying soul,
Lifts the light clouds sublime, and spre
thin,
Fleecy and white, o'er all-surrounding h
Forth fly the tepid airs; and unconfin'd,
Unbinding earth, the moving softness st
Joyous, the impatient husbandman perc
Relenting Nature, and his lusty steers
Drives from their stalls, to where the
plough
Lies in the furrow, loosen'd from the fros
There, unrefusing, to the harness'd yoke
They lend their shoulder, and begin thei
Cheer'd by the simple song and soaring
Meanwhile incumbent o'er the shining s
The master leans, removes th' obstructi
Winds the whole work, and sidelong
glebe.
While thro' the neighb'ring fields th
stalks,
With measur'd step; and liberal throws t
Into the faithful bosom of the ground:
The harrow follows harsh, and shuts the
Be gracious, Heaven! for now laboriou
Has done his part. Ye fostering breeze
Ye softening dews, ye tender showers, de
And temper all, thou world-reviving sun,
Into the perfect year! Nor ye who live
In luxury and ease, in pomp and pride,
Think these lost themes unworthy of yo
Such themes as these the rural Maro su

To wide imperial Rome, in the full height
Of elegance and taste, by Greece refin'd.
In ancient times, the sacred plough employ'd
The kings and awful fathers of mankind:
And some, with whom compar'd your insect-tribes
Are but the beings of a summer's day,
Have held the scale of empire, rul'd the storm
Of mighty war; then, with victorious hand,
Disdaining little delicacies, seiz'd
The plough, and greatly independent, scorn'd
All the vile stores Corruption can bestow.

Ye generous Britons, venerate the plough;
And o'er your hills, and long-withdrawing vales,
Let Autumn spread his treasures to the sun,
Luxuriant and unbounded: as the Sea,
Far thro' his azure turbulent domain,
Your empire owns, and from a thousand shores
Wafts all the pomp of life into your ports;
So with superior boon may your rich soil,
Exuberant, Nature's better blessings pour
O'er every land, the naked nations clothe,
And be th' exhaustless granary of a world!

. . . . . .

From the moist meadow to the wither'd hill,
Led by the breeze, the vivid verdure runs
And swells, and deepens, to the cherish'd eye.
The hawthorn whitens; and the juicy groves
Put forth their buds, unfolding by degrees,
Till the whole leafy forest stands display'd,
In full luxuriance to the sighing gales;
Where the deer rustle through the twining brake,
And the birds sing conceal'd. At once array'd
In all the colours of the flushing year,
By Nature's swift and secret-working hand,
The garden glows, and fills the liberal air
With *lavish fragrance*; while the promis'd fruit
Lies yet a little embryo, unperceiv'd,

Within its crimson fold. Now from the to
Buried in smoke, and sleep, and noisome dan
Oft let me wander o'er the dewy fields,
Where freshness breathes, and dash the t
bling drops
From the bent bush, as thro' the verdant ma
Of sweet-briar hedges I pursue my walk;
Or taste the smell of dairy, or ascend
Some eminence, AUGUSTA, in thy plains,
And see the country, far diffused around,
One boundless blush, one white empu
shower
Of mingled blossoms; where the raptur'd ey
Hurries from joy to joy, and, hid beneath
The fair profusion, yellow Autumn spies.

SUMMER

(1727)

From brightening fields of ether fair disclos
Child of the Sun, refulgent Summer comes,
In pride of youth, and felt through Nature's
depth:
He comes attended by the sultry Hours,
And ever-fanning breezes, on his way;
While, from his ardent look, the turning Sp
Averts her blushful face; and earth, and ski
All-smiling, to his hot dominion leaves.
Hence, let me haste into the mid-wood sha
Where scarce a sunbeam wanders thro'
gloom;
And on the dark-green grass, beside the bri
Of haunted stream, that by the roots of oak
Rolls o'er the rocky channel, lie at large,
And sing the glories of the circling year.

. . . . . .

Now swarms the village o'er the joyful

The rustic youth, brown with meridian toil,
Healthful and strong; full as the summer rose
Blown by prevailing suns, the ruddy maid,
Half naked, swelling on the sight, and all
Her kindled graces burning o'er her cheek.
E'en stooping age is here; and infant hands
Trail the long rake, or, with the fragrant load
O'ercharg'd, amid the kind oppression roll.
Wide flies the tedded grain; all in a row
Advancing broad, or wheeling round the field,
They spread their breathing harvest to the sun,
That throws refreshful round a rural smell.
Or, as they take the green-appearing ground,
And drive the dusky wave along the mead,
The russet hay-cock rises thick behind,
In order gay: While, heard from dale to dale,
Waking the breeze, resounds the blended voice
Of happy labour, love, and social glee.
Or rushing thence, in one diffusive band,
They drive the troubled flocks, by many a dog
Compell'd, to where the mazy-running brook
Forms a deep pool: this bank abrupt and high,
And that fair spreading in a pebbled shore.
Urg'd to the giddy brink, much is the toil,
The clamour much, of men, and boys, and dogs,
Ere the soft fearful people to the flood
Commit their woolly sides. And oft the swain,
On some impatient seizing, hurls them in:
Embolden'd then, nor hesitating more,
Fast, fast, they plunge amid the flashing wave,
And, panting, labour to the farther shore.
Repeated this till deep the well-wash'd fleece
Has drunk the flood, and from his lively haunt
The trout is banish'd by the sordid stream;
Heavy, and dripping to the breezy brow
Slow *move the harmless* race; where, as they
spread

Their swelling treasures to the sunny ray,
Inly disturb'd, and wond'ring what this wild
Outrageous tumult means, their loud complai
The country fill; and, tost from rock to rock,
Incessant bleatings run around the hills.
At last, of snowy white, the gather'd flocks
Are in the wattled pen innumerous press'd,
Head above head: and, rang'd in lusty rows,
The shepherds sit, and whet the sounding she
The housewife waits to roll her fleecy stores,
With all her gay-drest maids attending round
One, chief, in gracious dignity enthron'd,
Shines o'er the rest, the pastoral queen, and r
Her smiles, sweet beaming, on her shepherd ki
While the glad circle round them yield their so
To festive mirth, and wit that knows no gall

AUTUMN

(1730)

Crown'd with the sickle and the wheaten she
While Autumn, nodding o'er the yellow plain,
Comes jovial on; the Doric reed once more,
Well pleas'd, I tune. Whate'er the Wintry fr
Nitrous prepar'd, the various-blossom'd Sprin
Put in white promise forth; and Summer's s
Concocted strong; rush boundless now to view
Full, perfect all, and swell my glorious theme

. . . . . .

But see, the fading many-colour'd woods,
Shade deepening over shade, the country roun
Imbrown; a crowded umbrage, dusk, and d
Of every hue, from wan declining green
To sooty dark. These now the lonesome Mus
Low-whispering, lead into their leaf-str
walks,
And give the season in its latest view.
Meantime, light shadowing all, a sober cal

Fleeces unbounded ether; whose least wave
Stands tremulous, uncertain where to turn
The gentle current; while, illumin'd wide,
The dewy-skirted clouds imbibe the sun,
And thro' their lucid veil his soften'd force
Shed o'er the peaceful world. Then is the time,
For those whom Wisdom and whom Nature charm,
To steal themselves from the degenerate crowd,
And soar above this little scene of things;
To tread low-thoughted Vice beneath their feet;
To soothe the throbbing passions into peace,
And woo lone Quiet in her silent walks.
Thus solitary, and in pensive guise,
Oft let me wander o'er the russet mead,
And thro' the sadden'd grove, where scarce is heard
One dying strain, to cheer the woodman's toil.
Haply some widow'd songster pours his plaint,
Far, in faint warblings, thro' the tawny copse;
While congregated thrushes, linnets, larks,
And each wild throat, whose artless strains so late
Swell'd all the music of the swarming shades,
Robb'd of their tuneful souls, now shivering sit
On the dead tree, a dull despondent flock;
With not a brightness waving o'er their plumes,
And nought save chattering discord in their note.
Oh, let not, aim'd from some inhuman eye,
The gun the music of the coming year
Destroy; and harmless, unsuspecting harm,
Lay the weak tribes a miserable prey,
In mingled murder, fluttering on the ground!
The pale descending year, yet pleasing still,
A gentler mood inspires; for now the leaf
Incessant *rustles from the* mournful grove;
Oft startling such as, studious, walk below,

And slowly circles thro' the waving air.
But should a quicker breeze amid the bough
Sob, o'er the sky the leafy deluge streams;
Till chok'd, and matted with the dreary shov
The forest-walks, at every rising gale,
Roll wide the wither'd waste, and whistle bl
Fled is the blasted verdure of the fields:
And, shrunk into their beds, the flowery race
Their sunny robes resign. Even what remz
Of stronger fruits fall from the naked tree;
And woods, fields, gardens, orchards, all are
The desolated prospect thrills the soul.

WINTER

(1726)

See, Winter comes, to rule the varied year,
Sullen and sad, with all his rising train—
Vapours, and clouds, and storms. Be these
theme;
These, that exalt the soul to solemn thought
And heavenly musing. Welcome, kin
glooms!
Congenial horrors, hail! With frequent foo
Pleas'd have I, in my cheerful morn of life,
When nurs'd by careless Solitude I liv'd,
And sung of Nature with unceasing joy,—
Pleas'd have I wander'd through your ro
domain;
Trod the pure virgin-snows, myself as pure;
Heard the winds roar, and the big torrent bu
Or seen the deep-fermenting tempest brew'd
In the grim evening sky. Thus pass'd the t
Till through the lucid chambers of the Sou
Look'd out the joyous Spring, look'd out,
smil'd.

. . . . . .

The keener tempests come: and fuming dun
From all the livid East, or piercing North,
Thick clouds ascend; in whose capacious womb
A vapoury deluge lies, to snow congeal'd.
Heavy they roll their fleecy world along,
And the sky saddens with the gather'd storm.
Thro' the hush'd air the whitening shower descends,
At first thin-wavering; till at last the flakes
Fall broad and wide, and fast, dimming the day
With a continual flow. The cherish'd fields
Put on their winter-robe of purest white.
'Tis brightness all; save where the new snow melts
Along the mazy current. Low the woods
Bow their hoar head; and, ere the languid Sun
Faint from the West emits his evening ray,
Earth's universal face, deep-hid, and chill,
Is one wild dazzling waste, that buries wide
The works of Man. Drooping, the labourer-ox
Stands cover'd o'er with snow, and then demands
The fruit of all his toil. The fowls of heaven,
Tam'd by the cruel season, crowd around
The winnowing store, and claim the little boon
Which Providence assigns them. One alone,
The red-breast, sacred to the household gods,
Wisely regardful of th' embroiling sky,
In joyless fields and thorny thickets leaves
His shivering mates, and pays to trusted man
His annual visit. Half afraid, he first
Against the window beats; then, brisk, alights
On the warm hearth; then, hopping o'er the floor,
Eyes all the smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is:
Till, more familiar grown, the table-crumbs
Attract his slender feet. The foodless wilds
Pour forth their brown inhabitants. The hare,
Though timorous of heart, and hard beset

By death in various forms—dark snares, an
And more unpitying men—the garden seek
Urg'd on by fearless want. The bleating
Eye the bleak heaven, and next the glis
earth,
With looks of dumb despair; then, sad-dis
Dig for the wither'd herb thro' heaps of sn
. . . . . .
Ah! little think the gay licentious proud,
Whom pleasure, pow'r, and affluence surro
They who their thoughtless hours in giddy
And wanton, often cruel, riot waste;—
Ah! little think they, while they dance alc
How many feel, this very moment, death
And all the sad variety of pain.
How many sink in the devouring flood,
Or more devouring flame; how many ble
By shameful variance betwixt man and n
How many pine in want and dungeon glo
Shut from the common air, and common
Of their own limbs: How many drink the
Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread
Of misery: sore pierc'd by wintry winds,
How many shrink into the sordid hut
Of cheerless poverty: how many shake
With all the fiercer tortures of the mind,—
Unbounded passion, madness, guilt, remo
Whence tumbled headlong from the height
They furnish matter for the tragic Muse:
Ev'n in the vale where wisdom loves to dwe
With Friendship, Peace, and Contemp
join'd,
How many, rack'd with honest passions, di
In deep-retir'd distress: how many stand
Around the death-bed of their dearest frie
And point the parting anguish. Thought
man

Of these, and all the thousand nameless ills,
That one incessant struggle render life,
One scene of toil, of suff'ring, and of fate;
Vice in his high career would stand appall'd,
And heedless rambling Impulse learn to think;
The conscious heart of Charity would warm,
And her wide wish Benevolence dilate;
The social tear would rise, the social sigh;
And into clear perfection, gradual bliss,
Refining still, the social passions work.
And here can I forget the generous band,
Who, touch'd with human woe, redressive search'd
Into the horrors of the gloomy jail?
Unpitied and unheard, where misery moans;
Where Sickness pines; where Thirst and Hunger burn,
And poor Misfortune feels the lash of Vice.
While in the land of liberty—the land
Whose every street and public meeting glow
With open freedom—little tyrants rag'd;
Snatch'd the lean morsel from the starving mouth;
Tore from cold wintry limbs the tatter'd weed;
Even robb'd them of the last of comforts, sleep;
The free-born Briton to the dungeon chain'd,
Or, as the lust of cruelty prevail'd,
At pleasure mark'd him with inglorious stripes;
And crush'd out lives, by secret barbarous ways,
That for their country would have toil'd, or bled.
Oh great design! if executed well,
With patient care and wisdom-temper'd zeal.
Ye sons of mercy! yet resume the search;
Drag forth the legal monsters into light,
Wrench from their hands Oppression's iron rod,
And bid the cruel *feel the* pangs they give.
Much still untouch'd remains; in this rank age,

Much is the patriot's weeding hand requir
The toils of law,—what dark insidious m
Have cumbrous added, to perplex the truth
And lengthen simple justice into trade,—
How glorious were the day that saw these
And every man within the reach of right!

RULE BRITANNIA

(1740)

When Britain first at Heaven's command
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of her land,
And guardian angels sung the strain:
Rule, Britannia! Britannia rules the wave
Britons never shall be slaves.

The nations not so blest as thee
Must in their turn to tyrants fall,
While thou shalt flourish great and free,
The dread and envy of them all.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
More dreadful from each foreign stroke
As the loud blast that tears the skies
Serves but to root thy native oak.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame;
All their attempts to bend thee down
Will but arouse thy generous flame,
And work their woe and thy renown.

To thee belongs the rural reign;
Thy cities shall with commerce shine;
All thine shall be the subject main,
And every shore it circles thine!

The Muses, still with Freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair;
Blest Isle, with matchless beauty crown'd
And manly hearts to guard the fair:—
Rule, Britannia! Britannia rules the waves!
Britons never shall be slaves!

William Collins

1721–1759.

ODE TO EVENING

(From *Odes*, 1746)

If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
May hope, chaste eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales,

O nymph reserved, while now the bright-haired sun,
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed:

Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short, shrill shriek, flits by on leathern wing;
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum:
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breath some softened strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy dark
vale,
May, not unseemly, with its stillness suit,
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return!

For when thy folding star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
The fragrant hours, and elves
Who slept in flowers the day,

And many a nymph who wreathes her brows
sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier
The pensive pleasures sweet
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then lead, calm votaress, where some sheety
Cheers the lone heath, or some time-hallowed
Or up-land fallows grey
Reflect its last cool gleam.

But when chill blustering winds, or driving
Forbid my willing feet, be mine the hut,
That from the mountain's side,
Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered sp
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While spring shall pour his showers, as o
wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest ev
While summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light;

While sallow autumn fills thy lap with leaves;
Or winter yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes;

So long, sure-found beneath the sylvan shed,
Shall fancy, friendship, science, rose-lipp'd health,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And hymn thy favorite name!

THE PASSIONS

AN ODE FOR MUSIC

(From the same)

When music, heavenly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The passions oft, to hear her shell,
Thronged around her magic cell,
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possest beyond the muse's painting:
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturbed, delighted, raised, refined;
Till once, 'tis said, when all were fired,
Filled with fury, rapt, inspired,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatched her instruments of sound;
And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each (for madness ruled the hour)
Would prove his own expressive power.
First fear, his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewildered laid,
And back recoiled, he knew not why,
Even at the sound himself had made.

Next anger rushed; his eyes on fire,
In lightnings owned his secret stings:
In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
And swept, with hurried hand, the strings.

With woful measures wan despair
Low, sullen sounds his grief beguiled;
A solemn, strange, and mingled air;
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delightful measure?
Still it whispered promised pleasure,
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hai
Still would her touch the strain prolong;
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
She called on echo still, through all the song;
And, where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at every cl
And hope enchanted smiled, and waved her gol
hair.
And longer had she sung;—but, with a frow
Revenge impatient rose:
He threw his blood-stained sword, in thun
down;
And with a withering look,
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe!
And, ever and anon, he beat
The doubling drum, with furious heat;
And though sometimes, each dreary pause
tween,
Dejected pity, at his side,
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unaltered mien,
While each strained ball of sight seemed bu
ing from his head.

Thy numbers, jealousy, to naught were fixed;
Sad proof of thy distressful state;
Of differing themes the veering song was mixed;
And now it courted love, now raving called on hate.
With eyes upraised, as one inspired,
Pale melancholy sat retired;
And, from her wild sequestered seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Poured through the mellow horn her pensive soul:
And, dashing soft from rocks around,
Bubbling runnels joined the sound;
Through glades and glooms the mingled measure stole,
Or, o'er some haunted stream, with fond delay,
Round an holy calm diffusing,
Love of peace, and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.
But O! how altered was its sprightlier tone,
When cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
Her bow across her shoulder flung,
Her buskins gemmed with morning dew,
Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
The hunter's call, to faun and dryad known!
The oak-crowned sisters, and their chaste-eyed queen,
Satyrs and sylvan boys, were seen,
Peeping from forth their alleys green:
Brown exercise rejoiced to hear;
And sport leapt up, and seized his beechen spear.
Last came joy's ecstatic trial:
He, with viny crown advancing,
First to the lively pipe his hand addrest;
But soon he saw the brisk awakening viol,
Whose sweet entrancing voice he loved the *best;*

They would have thought who heard the
They saw, in Tempe's vale, her native
Amidst the festal sounding shades,
To some unwearied minstrel dancing,
While, as his flying fingers kissed the st
Love framed with mirth a gay fa
round:
Loose were her tresses seen, her zo
bound;
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repe
Shook thousand odours from his dewy wi

O music! sphere-descended maid,
Friend of pleasure, wisdom's aid!
Why, goddess! why, to us denied,
Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
As, in that loved Athenian bower,
You learned an all-commanding power,
Thy mimic soul, O nymph endeared,
Can well recall what then it heard;
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to virtue, fancy, art?
Arise, as in that elder time,
Warm, energic, chaste, sublime!
Thy wonders, in that godlike age,
Fill thy recording sister's page—
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age;
E'en all at once together found,
Cecilia's mingled world of sound—
O bid our vain endeavours cease;
Revive the just designs of Greece:
Return in all thy simple state!
Confirm the tales her sons relate!

ODE

WRITTEN IN THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR 1746

How sleep the brave who sink to rest,
By all their country's wishes blessed!
When spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There honour comes, a pilgrim grey,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell, a weeping hermit, there!

DIRGE IN CYMBELINE

SUNG BY GUIDERIUS AND ARVIRAGUS OVER FIDELE, SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD

(First published in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, for October. 1749)

To fair Fidele's grassy tomb
  Soft maids and village hinds shall bring
Each opening sweet of earliest bloom,
  And rifle all the breathing spring.

No wailing ghost shall dare appear
  To vex with shrieks this quiet grove;
But shepherd lads assemble here,
And melting virgins own their love.

No withered witch shall here be seen;
No goblins lead their nightly crew:
The female fays shall haunt the green,
And dress thy grave with pearly dew!

The redbreast oft, at evening hours,
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss, and gathered flowers,
To deck the ground where thou art laid.

When howling winds and beating rain,
In tempests shake the sylvan cell;
Or 'midst the chase, on every plain,
The tender thought on thee shall dwell;

Each lonely scene shall thee restore;
For thee the tear be duly shed;
Beloved till life can charm no more,
And mourned till pity's self be dead.

Thomas Gray

1716–1771

ODE ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE

(1747)

Ye distant spires, ye antique towers,
That crown the watry glade,
Where grateful Science still adores
Her HENRY'S holy Shade;
And ye, that from the stately brow
Of WINDSOR'S heights th' expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver-winding way:

Ah, happy hills, ah, pleasing shade,
  Ah, fields belov'd in vain,
Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
  A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales, that from ye blow,
A momentary bliss bestow,
  As waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
  To breathe a second spring.

Say, father THAMES, for thou hast seen
  Full many a sprightly race
Disporting on thy margent green
  The paths of pleasure trace,
Who foremost now delight to cleave
With pliant arm thy glassy wave?
  The captive linnet which enthral?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,
  Or urge the flying ball?

While some on earnest business bent
  Their murm'ring labours ply
'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint,
  To sweeten liberty:
Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign,
  And unknown regions dare descry:
Still as they run they look behind,
They hear a voice in every wind,
  And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,
  Less pleasing when possest;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
  The sunshine of the breast:

Theirs buxom health of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever-new,
And lively chear of vigour born;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
That fly th' approach of morn.

Alas, regardless of their doom
The little victims play!
No sense have they of ills to come,
Nor care beyond to-day:
Yet see how all around 'em wait
The Ministers of human fate,
And black Misfortune's baleful train!
Ah, show them where in ambush stand
To seize their prey the murth'rous band!
Ah, tell them, they are men!

These shall the fury Passions tear,
The vulturs of the mind,
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame that sculks behind;
Or pineing Love shall waste their youth,
Or Jealousy with rankling tooth,
That inly gnaws the secret heart,
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-visag'd comfortless Despair,
And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,
And grinning Infamy.
The stings of Falsehood those shall try,
And hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,
That mocks the tear it forc'd to flow;
And keen Remorse with blood defil'd,

And moody Madness laughing wild
Amid severest woe.

Lo, in the vale of years beneath
A griesly troop are seen,
The painful family of Death,
More hideous than their Queen:
This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
That every labouring sinew strains,
Those in the deeper vitals rage:
Lo, Poverty, to fill the band,
That numbs the soul with icy hand,
And slow-consuming Age.

To each his suff'rings: all are men,
Condemn'd alike to groan,
The tender for another's pain;
Th' unfeeling for his own.
Yet, ah! why should they know their fate?
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly flies,
Thought would destroy their paradise.
No more; where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise.

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

(1751)

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where *the beetle* wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's sh
Where heaves the turf in many a moulde
heap,
Each in his narrow cell forever laid
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-b
shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn
No more shall rouse them from their lowly

For them no more the blazing hearth shall b
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to shar

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has br
How jocund did they drive their team afiel
How bow'd the woods beneath their stu
stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er g
Await alike th' inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault,
If Mem'ry o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their hist'ry in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbad: nor circumscrib'd alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes
fin'd;
Forbad to wade through slaughter to a thro
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to
To quench the blushes of ingenuous sha
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flam

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble str
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stra
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their wa

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless scul
deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unle
muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful da
Nor cast one longing ling'ring look behi

On some fond breast the parting soul reli
Some pious drops the closing eye requires
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cr
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fire

For thee, who mindful of th' unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed Swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove,
Now drooping, woful-wan; like one forlorn,
Or craz'd with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

"One morn I missed him on the custom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his fav'rite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he:

"The next, with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him
borne:
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay,
Grav'd on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A Youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown;
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heav'n did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Mis'ry all he had, a tear,
He gain'd from heav'n ('twas all he wish'd
friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread ab
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,
The bosom of his Father and his God.

THE BARD

(From *Odes*, 1757)

I. 1.

"Ruin seize thee, ruthless King!
Confusion on thy banners wait,
Tho' fann'd by Conquest's crimson wing
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm, nor Hauberk's twisted mail,
Nor even thy virtues, Tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
From Cambria's curse, from Cambri
tears!"
Such were the sounds, that o'er the crested prid
Of the first Edward scatter'd wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his lo
array.
Stout Glo'ster stood aghast in speechless tranc
"To arms!" cried Mortimer, and couch'd h
quiv'ring lance.

I. 2.

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the Poet stood;
(Loose his beard, and hoary hair
Stream'd, like a meteor, to the troubled air,)
And with a Master's hand, and Prophet's fire,
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.
"Hark, how each giant-oak, and desert cave,
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!
O'er thee, oh King! their hundred arms they wave,
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay."

I. 3.

"Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hush'd the stormy main:
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed:
Mountains, ye mourn in vain
Modred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-top'd head.
On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,
Smear'd with gore, and ghastly pale:
Far, far aloof th' affrighted ravens sail;
The famish'd Eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear, as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear, as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries—
No more I *weep*. They do not sleep.
On yonder cliffs, a griesly band,

I see them sit, they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land:
With me in dreadful harmony they j
And weave with bloody hands the tis
line."

II. 1.

"Weave the warp, and weave the wo
The winding-sheet of Edward's race.
Give ample room, and verge enou
The characters of hell to trace.
Mark the year, and mark the night,
When Severn shall re-echo with affri
The shrieks of death, thro' Berkley's
ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing King!
She-Wolf of France, with unrelent
That tear'st the bowels of thy mangle
From thee be born, who o'er th
hangs
The scourge of Heav'n. What Terr
him wait!
Amazement in his van, with Flight co
And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitud

II. 2.

"Mighty Victor, mighty Lord!
Low on his funeral couch he lies!
No pitying heart, no eye, afford
A tear to grace his obsequies.
Is the sable Warriour fled?
Thy son is gone. He rests among the
The Swarm, that in thy noontide b
born?
Gone to salute the rising Morn.
Fair laughs the Morn, and soft the Zep
While proudly riding o'er the azur

In gallant trim the gilded Vessel goes;
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;
Regardless of the sweeping Whirlwind's sway,
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey."

II. 3.

"Fill high the sparkling bowl,
The rich repast prepare,
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast:
Close by the regal chair
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon their baffled Guest.
Heard ye the din of battle bray,
Lance to lance, and horse to horse?
Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
And thro' the kindred squadrons mow their way.
Ye Towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murther fed,
Revere his Consort's faith, his Father's fame,
And spare the meek Usurper's holy head.
Above, below, the rose of snow,
Twined with her blushing foe, we spread:
The bristled Boar in infant gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
Now, Brothers, bending o'er th' accursed loom
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom."

III. 1.

"Edward, lo! to sudden fate
(Weave *we the woof.* The thread is spun.)
Half of thy heart we consecrate.

(The web is wove. The work is done.)
Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unbless'd, unpitied, here to mourn:
In yon bright track, that fires the western skie
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's heig
Descending slow their glitt'ring skirts u
roll?
Visions of glory, spare my aching sight,
Ye unborn Ages, crowd not on my soul!
No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.
All hail, ye genuine Kings, Britannia's Issu
hail!"

III. 2.

"Girt with many a Baron bold
Sublime their starry fronts they rear;
And gorgeous Dames, and Statesmen old
In bearded majesty, appear.
In the midst a Form divine!
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-line;
Her lyon-port, her awe-commanding face,
Attemper'd sweet to virgin-grace.
What strings symphonious tremble in the air
What strains of vocal transport round l
play.
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear;
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay
Bright Rapture calls, and soaring, as she sing
Waves in the eye of Heav'n her many-colou
wings."

III. 3.

"The verse adorn again
Fierce War, and faithful Love,
And Truth severe, by fairy Fiction drest.
In buskin'd measures move

Pale Grief, and Pleasing Pain,
With Horrour, Tyrant of the throbbing breast.
A Voice, as of the Cherub-Choir,
Gales from blooming Eden bear;
And distant warblings lessen on my ear,
That lost in long futurity expire.
Fond impious Man, think'st thou, yon sanguine cloud,
Rais'd by thy breath, has quench'd the Orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
Enough for me: With joy I see
The different doom our Fates assign.
Be thine Despair, and sceptr'd Care,
To triumph, and to die, are mine."
He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
Deep in the roaring tide he plung'd to endless night.

Oliver Goldsmith

1728–1774

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

(1770)

Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheer'd the labouring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delay'd:
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,
How *often have I loiter*'d o'er thy green,
*Where humble happi*ness endear'd each scene!

How often have I paus'd on every charm,
The shelter'd cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topt the neighbouri
hill,
The hawthorn bush with seats beneath the sha
For talking age and whispering lovers made!
How often have I blest the coming day
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train from labour free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old survey'd,
And many a gambol frolick'd o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength w
round!
And still, as each repeated pleasure tir'd,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspir'd
The dancing pair that simply sought renown
By holding out to tire each other down,
The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter titter'd round the plac
The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love,
The matron's glance that would those lo
reprove.
These were thy charms, sweet village! sports l
these,
With sweet succession, taught even toil to ple
These round thy bowers their cheerful influe
shed;
These were thy charms—but all these charms
fled.
Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the law
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms wi
drawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green:

One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain.
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But chok'd with sedges, works its weedy way;
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest;
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries:
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall;
And, trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay:
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade—
A breath can make them, as a breath has made—
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroy'd, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintain'd its man:
For him light labour spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life requir'd, but gave no more;
His best companions, innocence and health,
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are alter'd; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain:
Along the lawn where scatter'd hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose,
And every want to opulence allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.
Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that ask'd but little room,
Those healthful sports that grac'd the peaceful scene,
Liv'd in each look and brighten'd all the green—
These, far *departing*, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn! parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds
Amidst thy tangling walks and ruin'd ground
And, many a year elaps'd, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthor
grew,
Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pai
In all my wanderings round this world of car
In all my griefs—and God has given my share-
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose.
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amidst the swains to show my book-learn'd skil
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw;
And as an hare whom hounds and horns pursu
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return—and die at home at last.
O blest retirement, friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, that never must be mine!
How happy he who crowns, in shades like the
A youth of labour with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations t
And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep
Nor surly porter stands, in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate;
But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend,
Bends to the grave with unperceiv'd decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way,

And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past.
Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening's close
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose.
There as I passed with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came soften'd from below:
The swain responsive as the milkmaid sung,
The sober herd that low'd to meet their young,
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school,
The watch-dog's voice that bay'd the whispering wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind—
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And fill'd each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
No busy steps the grass-grown footway tread,
For all the bloomy flush of life is fled—
All but yon widow'd, solitary thing,
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron—forc'd in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her wintry faggot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn—
She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain!
Near yonder copse, where once the garden smil'd,
And still where many a garden-flower grows wild,
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year.
Remote *from towns he* ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had chang'd, nor wish'd to change his *place;*

Unpractis'd he to fawn, or seek for power
By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize
More skill'd to raise the wretched than to ris
His house was known to all the vagrant trai
He chid their wanderings, but reliev'd their p
The long-remember'd beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breas
The ruin'd spendthrift, now no longer proud
Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims
low'd;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talk'd the night away,
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow don
Shoulder'd his crutch and show'd how fields v
won.
Pleas'd with his guests, the good man learn'
glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And even his failings lean'd to virtue's side;
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watch'd and wept, he pray'd and felt for a
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledg'd offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reprov'd each dull delay,
Allur'd to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain by turns dismay'
The reverend champion stood: at his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch
raise,
And his last faltering accents whisper'd praise
At church, with meek and unaffected grace,

His looks adorn'd the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,
And fools who came to scoff remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With ready zeal, each honest rustic ran;
Even children follow'd, with endearing wile,
And pluck'd his gown, to share the good man's smile:
His ready smile a parent's warmth exprest,
Their welfare pleas'd him, and their cares distrest.
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven:
As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossom'd furze unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,
The village master taught his little school.
A man severe he was, and stern to view;
I knew him well, and every truant knew:
Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laugh'd with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd;
Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault.
The village all declar'd how much he knew;
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too,
Lands *he could measure,* terms and tides presage,
And even the story ran that he could gauge.

In arguing too the parson own'd his skill,
For even though vanquish'd, he could argue
While words of learned length and thund
sound
Amaz'd the gazing rustics rang'd around;
And still they gaz'd, and still the wonder g
That one small head could carry all he kne
But past is all his fame: the very spot,
Where many a time he triumph'd, is forgo
Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on hi
Where once the sign-post caught the passin
Low lies that house where nut-brown dra
inspir'd,
Where gray-beard mirth and smiling toil r
Where village statesmen talk'd with looks
found,
And news much older than their ale went r
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlour splendours of that festive plac
The whitewash'd wall, the nicely sanded fl
The varnish'd clock that click'd behind the
The chest contriv'd a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures plac'd for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of go
The hearth, except when winter chill'd the
With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fenne
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for sh
Rang'd o'er the chimney, glisten'd in a ro
Vain transitory splendours! could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fa
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's hea
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's ta
No more the woodman's ballad shall preva

No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be prest,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art;
Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway;
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfin'd.
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth array'd,
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain;
And, even while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting asks, if this be joy?

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting Folly hails them from her shore;
Hoards even beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around;
Yet count our gains: this wealth is but a name
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a space that many poor supplied—
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds:
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
Has robbed *the neighbouring* fields of half their
growth;

His seat, where solitary spots are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies.
While thus the land, adorn'd for pleasure, all
In barren splendour feebly waits the fall.

As some fair female, unadorn'd and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
Slights every borrow'd charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes;
But when those charms are past, for charms
frail,
When time advances, and when lovers fail,
She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
In all the glaring impotence of dress:
Thus fares the land, by luxury betray'd;
In nature's simplest charms at first array'd,
But verging to decline, its splendours rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise;
While, scourg'd by famine from the smiling land,
The mournful peasant leads his humble band;
And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms—a garden, and a grave.

Where then, ah! where shall poverty reside
To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride?
If to some common's fenceless limits stray'd
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide
And even the bare-worn common is denied.

If to the city sped—what waits him there?
To see profusion that he must not share;
To see ten thousand baneful arts combin'd
To pamper luxury, and thin mankind;
To see each joy the sons of pleasure know,
Extorted from his fellow-creature's woe.
Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;

Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
There, the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
The dome where pleasure holds her midnight reign,
Here, richly deck'd, admits the gorgeous train;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy!
Sure these denote one universal joy!
Are these thy serious thoughts? Ah, turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless shivering female lies.
She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,
Has wept at tales of innocence distrest;
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn;
Now lost to all—her friends, her virtue fled—
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
And, pinch'd with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour
When idly first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel, and robes of country brown.
Do thine, sweet Auburn, thine, the loveliest train,
Do thy fair tribes participate her pain?
Even now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread.
Ah, no! To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.
Far different there from all that charm'd before,
The various terrors of that horrid shore:
Those blazing *suns that dart* a downward ray,
*And fiercely shed intol*erable day;

Those matted woods where birds forget to
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields with rank luxu
crown'd,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death arc
Where at each step the stranger fears to w
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless
And savage men more murderous still thar
While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravag'd landscape with the s
Far different these from every former scei
The cooling brook, the grassy-vested greei
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only shelter'd thefts of harmless love
Good Heaven! what sorrows gloom'd tha
ing day,
That call'd them from their native walks
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly look'
last,
And took a long farewell, and wish'd in va
For seats like these beyond the western m
And shuddering still to face the distant d
Return'd and wept, and still return'd to w
The good old sire the first prepar'd to go
To new-found worlds, and wept for other's
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wish'd for worlds beyond the grav
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms
And left a lover's for a father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her
And blest the cot where every pleasure ros
And kiss'd her thoughtless babes with
tear,

And clasp'd them close, in sorrow doubly dear;
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.
O Luxury! thou curst by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchang'd are things like these for thee!
How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigour not their own:
At every draught more large and large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank, unwieldy woe;
Till sapp'd their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.
Even now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done;
Even now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural Virtues leave the land.
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented Toil, and hospitable Care,
And kind connubial Tenderness are there;
And Piety with wishes placed above,
And steady Loyalty, and faithful Love.
And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
Unfit in these degenerate times of shame
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;
Dear, charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride,
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
Thou found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
Thou guide by which the noble arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!
Farewell! and O where'er thy voice be tried,

On Torno's cliffs or Pambamarca's side,
Whether where equinoctial fervours glow,
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
Redress the rigours of the inclement clime;
Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain;
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain;
Teach him, that states of native strength posses
Though very poor, may still be very blest;
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift deca
As ocean sweeps the labour'd mole away;
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

Thomas Chatterton

1752–1770

MINSTREL'S ROUNDELAY

(From *Aella*, 1770)

O sing unto my roundelay,
O drop the briny tear with me,
Dance no more at holy-day,
Like a running river be.
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Black his locks as the winter night
White his skin as the summer snow,
Red his face as the morning light,
Cold he lies in the grave below.
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Sweet his tongue as the throstle's note,
Quick in dance as thought can be,
Deft his tabor, cudgel stout,
O he lies by the willow-tree!
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Hark! the raven flaps his wing
In the briar'd dell below;
Hark! the death-owl loud doth sing
To the nightmares as they go.
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

See! the white moon shines on high;
Whiter is my true love's shroud;
Whiter than the morning sky,
Whiter than the evening cloud.
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Here upon my true love's grave
Shall the barren flowers be laid:
Not one holy Saint to save
All the coldness of a maid!
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

With my hands I'll gird the briars
Round his holy corse to grow.
Elfin Faëry, light your fires;
Here my body still shall bow.
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Come, with acorn-cup and thorn,
Drain my hearte's blood away;
Life and all its good I scorn,
Dance by night or feast by day.
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

THE BALADE OF CHARITIE

(From *Poems* collected 1777)

In Virginè the sultry Sun 'gan sheene
And hot upon the meads did cast his ray:
The apple ruddied from its paly green,
And the soft pear did bend the leafy spray;
The pied chelàndry sang the livelong day:
'Twas now the pride, the manhood of the year,
And eke the ground was dight in its most deft aumere.

The sun was gleaming in the mid of day,
Dead still the air and eke the welkin blue,
When from the sea arist in drear array
A heap of clouds of sable sullen hue,
The which full fast unto the woodland drew,
Hiding at once the sunnè's festive face;
And the black tempest swelled and gathered up apace.

Beneath an holm, fast by a pathway side
Which did unto Saint Godwyn's convent lead,
A hapless pilgrim moaning did abide,
Poor in his view, ungentle in his weed,
Long breast-full of the miseries of need.
Where from the hailstorm could the beggar fly?
He had no housen there, nor any convent nigh.

Look in his gloomèd face; his sprite there scan,
How woe-begone, how withered, sapless, dead!
Haste to thy church-glebe-house, accursèd man,
Haste to thy coffin, thy sole slumbering-bed!
Cold as the clay which will grow on thy head
Are Charity and Love among high elves;
The Knights and Barons live for pleasure and themselves.

The gathered storm is ripe; the big drops fall;
The sunburnt meadows smoke and drink the rain;
The coming ghastness dothe the cattle appal,
And the full flocks are driving o'er the plain;
Dashed from the clouds, the waters gush again;
The welkin opes, the yellow levin flies,
And the hot fiery steam in the wide flame-lowe dies.

List! now the thunder's rattling clamouring sound
Moves slowly on, and then upswollen clangs,
Shakes the high spire, and lost, dispended, drown'd,
Still on the affrighted ear of terror hangs;
The winds are up; the lofty elm-tree swangs;
Again the levin and the thunder pours,
And the full clouds are burst at once in stormy showers.

Spurring his palfrey o'er the watery plain,
The Abbot of Saint Godwyn's convent came;
His chapournette was drenchèd with the rain,
His painted girdle met with mickle shame;
He backwards told his bederoll at the same.

The storm increasèd, and he drew aside,
With the poor alms-craver near to the holm to bide.

His cope was all of Lincoln cloth so fine,
With a gold button fastened near his chin;
His autremete was edged with golden twine,
And his peaked shoe a lordling's might have been;
Full well it showed he counted cost no sin:
The trammels of the palfrey pleased his sight,
For the horse-milliner his head with roses dight.

"An alms, Sir Priest!" the drooping pilgrim said,
"O let me wait within your convent-door
Till the sun shineth high above our head
And the loud tempest of the air is o'er.
Helpless and old am I, alas! and poor:
No house, nor friend, no money in my pouch;
All that I call my own is this my silver crouch."

"Varlet," replied the Abbot, "cease your din;
This is no season alms and prayers to give;
My porter never lets a beggar in;
None touch my ring who not in honour live."
And now the sun with the black clouds did strive,
And shot upon the ground his glaring ray:
The Abbot spurred his steed, and eftsoons rode away.

Once more the sky was black, the thunder roll'd:
Fast running o'er the plain a priest was seen,
Not dight full proud nor buttoned up in gold;
His cope and jape were grey, and eke were clean;
A Limitour he was, of order seen;

And from the pathway side then turned he,
Where the poor beggar lay beneath the holmen tree.

"An alms, Sir Priest," the drooping pilgrim said,
"For sweet Saint Mary and your order's sake!"
The Limitour then loosened his pouch-thread
And did thereout a groat of silver take;
The needy pilgrim did for gladness shake.
"Here, take this silver, it may ease thy care;
We are God's stewards all,—nought of our own we bear.

"But ah! unhappy pilgrim, learn of me,
Scarce any give a rentroll to their Lord:
Here, take my semicope,—thou'rt bare, I see;
'Tis thine; the Saints will give me my reward!"
He left the pilgrim and his way aborde.
Virgin and holy Saints who sit in gloure,
Or give the mighty will, or give the good man power.

William Cowper

1731–1800

THE TASK

(1785)

(Selections from Book I. *The Sofa*)

But though true worth and virtue, in the mild
And genial soil of cultivated life,
Thrive *most, and may* perhaps thrive only there,
Yet not in cities oft: in proud and gay

And gain-devoted cities. Thither flow,
As to a common and most noisome sewer,
The dregs and feculence of every land.
In cities foul example on most minds
Begets its likeness. Rank abundance breeds
In gross and pampered cities sloth and lust,
And wantonness and gluttonous excess.
In cities vice is hidden with most ease,
Or seen with least reproach; and virtue, taught
By frequent lapse, can hope no triumph there
Beyond the achievement of successful flight.
I do confess them nurseries of the arts,
In which they flourish most; where, in the beam
Of warm encouragement, and in the eye
Of public note, they reach their perfect size.
Such London is, by taste and wealth proclaimed
The fairest capital of all the world,
By riot and incontinence the worst.
There, touched by Reynolds, a dull blank becomes
A lucid mirror, in which Nature sees
All her reflected features. Bacon there
Gives more than female beauty to a stone,
And Chatham's eloquence to marble lips.
Nor does the chisel occupy alone
The powers of sculpture, but the style as much;
Each province of her art her equal care.
With nice incision of her guided steel
She ploughs a brazen field, and clothes a soil
So sterile, with what charms soe'er she will,
The richest scenery and the loveliest forms.
Where finds Philosophy her eagle eye,
With which she gazes at yon burning disk
Undazzled, and detects and counts his spots?
In London. Where her implements exact,
With which she calculates, computes, and scans
All distance, motion, magnitude, and now
Measures an atom, and now girds a world?

In London. Where has commerce such a mart,
So rich, so thronged, so drained, and so supplied,
As London, opulent, enlarged, and still
Increasing London? Babylon of old
Not more the glory of the earth than she,
A more accomplished world's chief glory now.
She has her praise. Now mark a spot or two
That so much beauty would do well to purge;
And show this queen of cities, that so fair
May yet be foul, so witty yet not wise.
It is not seemly, nor of good report,
That she is slack in discipline; more prompt
To avenge than to prevent the breach of law;
That she is rigid in denouncing death
On petty robbers, and indulges life
And liberty, and oftimes honour too,
To peculators of the public gold;
That thieves at home must hang, but he that puts
Into his overgorged and bloated purse
The wealth of Indian provinces, escapes.
Nor is it well, nor can it come to good,
That, through profane and infidel contempt
Of Holy Writ, she has presumed to annul
And abrogate, as roundly as she may,
The total ordinance and will of God;
Advancing Fashion to the post of Truth,
And centering all authority in modes
And customs of her own, till Sabbath rites
Have dwindled into unrespected forms,
And knees and hassocks are well-nigh divorced.
God made the country, and man made the town:
What wonder then, that health and virtue, gifts
That can alone make sweet the bitter draught
That life holds out to all, should most abound
And *least be threatened* in the fields and groves?
Possess ye therefore, ye who, borne about

In chariots and sedans, know no fatigue
But that of idleness, and taste no scenes
But such as art contrives, possess ye still
Your element; there only ye can shine,
There only minds like yours can do no harm.
Our groves were planted to console at noon
The pensive wanderer in their shades. At ev
The moonbeam, sliding softly in between
The sleeping leaves, is all the light they wish,
Birds warbling all the music. We can spare
The splendour of your lamps, they but eclip
Our softer satellite. Your songs confound
Our more harmonious notes: the thrush dep
Scared, and the offended nightingale is mut
There is a public mischief in your mirth,
It plagues your country. Folly such as your
Graced with a sword, and worthier of a fan,
Has made, what enemies could ne'er have don
Our arch of empire, steadfast but for you,
A mutilated structure, soon to fall.

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BOOK II.—THE TIME-PIECE

Oh for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless contiguity of shade,
Where rumour of oppression and deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful war,
Might never reach me more! My ear is pain
My soul is sick with every day's report
Of wrong and outrage with which earth is fil
There is no flesh in man's obdurate heart,
It does not feel for man; the natural bond
Of brotherhood is severed as the flax
That falls asunder at the touch of fire.
He finds his fellow guilty of a skin
Not coloured like his own, and having power
To enforce the wrong, for such a worthy cau

Dooms and devotes him as his lawful prey.
Lands intersected by a narrow frith
Abhor each other. Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations who had else
Like kindred drops been mingled into one.
Thus man devotes his brother, and destroys;
And worse than all, and most to be deplored,
As human nature's broadest, foulest blot,
Chains him, and tasks him, and exacts his sweat
With stripes that Mercy, with a bleeding heart,
Weeps when she sees inflicted on a beast.
Then what is man? And what man seeing this,
And having human feelings, does not blush
And hang his head, to think himself a man?
I would not have a slave to till my ground,
To carry me, to fan me while I sleep,
And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth
That sinews bought and sold have ever earned.
No: dear as freedom is, and in my heart's
Just estimation prized above all price,
I had much rather be myself the slave
And wear the bonds, than fasten them on him.
We have no slaves at home.—Then why abroad?
And they themselves once ferried o'er the wave
That parts us, are emancipate and loosed.
Slaves cannot breathe in England; if their lungs
Receive our air, that moment they are free;
They touch our country, and their shackles fall.
That's noble, and bespeaks a nation proud
And jealous of the blessing. Spread it then,
And let it circulate through every vein
Of all your empire; that where Britain's power
Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too.

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BOOK III.—THE GARDEN

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I was a stricken deer that left the herd
Long since; with many an arrow deep infixed

My panting side was charged, when I withdrew
To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.
There was I found by One who had Himself
Been hurt by the archers. In His side He bore
And in His hands and feet, the cruel scars.
With gentle force soliciting the darts,
He drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live
Since then, with few associates, in remote
And silent woods I wander, far from those
My former partners of the peopled scene;
With few associates, and not wishing more.
Here much I ruminate, as much I may,
With other views of men and manners now
Than once, and others of a life to come.

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BOOK IV.—THE WINTER'S EVENING

Hark! 'tis the twanging horn! O'er yonder bridge,
That with its wearisome but needful length
Bestrides the wintry flood, in which the moon
Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright,
He comes, the herald of a noisy world,
With spattered boots, strapped waist, and frozen locks,
News from all nations lumbering at his back.
True to his charge, the close-packed load behind
Yet careless what he brings, his one concern
Is to conduct it to the destined inn,
And having dropped the expected bag—pass on.
He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
Cold and yet cheerful: messenger of grief
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some,
To him indifferent whether grief or joy.
Houses in ashes, and the fall of stocks,
Births, deaths, and marriages, epistles wet

With tears that trickled down the writer's cheeks
Fast as the periods from his fluent quill,
Or charged with amorous sighs of absent swains,
Or nymphs responsive, equally affect
His horse and him, unconscious of them all.
But oh the important budget! ushered in
With such heart-shaking music, who can say
What are its tidings? have our troops awaked?
Or do they still, as if with opium drugged,
Snore to the murmurs of the Atlantic wave?
Is India free? and does she wear her plumed
And jewelled turban with a smile of peace,
Or do we grind her still? The grand debate,
The popular harangue, the tart reply,
The logic, and the wisdom, and the wit,
And the loud laugh—I long to know them all;
I burn to set the imprisoned wranglers free,
And give them voice and utterance once again.
Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And while the bubbling and loud hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.

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Oh Winter! ruler of the inverted year,
Thy scattered hair with sleet like ashes filled,
Thy breath congealed upon thy lips, thy cheeks
Fringed with a beard made white with other snows
Than those of age, thy forehead wrapt in clouds,
A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,
But urged by storms along its slippery way;
I love *thee, all unlovely* as thou seemest,
And dreaded as thou art. Thou holdest the sun

A prisoner in the yet undawning east,
Shortening his journey between morn and
And hurrying him, impatient of his stay,
Down to the rosy west; but kindly still
Compensating his loss with added hours
Of social converse and instructive ease,
And gathering, at short notice, in one gr
The family dispersed, and fixing thought
Not less dispersed by daylight and its ca
I crown thee King of intimate delights,
Fireside enjoyments, home-born happiness,
And all the comforts that the lowly roof
Of undisturbed retirement, and the hour
Of long uninterrupted evening know.

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Come, Evening, once again, season of
Return, sweet Evening, and continue long
Methinks I see thee in the streaky west,
With matron step slow moving, while the
Treads on thy sweeping train; one hand en
In letting fall the curtain of repose
On bird and beast, the other charged for r
With sweet oblivion of the cares of day;
Not sumptuously adorned, nor needing ai
Like homely-featured Night, of clustering
A star or two just twinkling on thy brow
Suffices thee; save that the moon is thine
No less than hers, not worn indeed on hig
With ostentatious pageantry, but set
With modest grandeur in thy purple zone,
Resplendent less, but of an ample round.
Come then, and thou shalt find thy votary
Or make me so. Composure is thy gift:
And whether I devote thy gentler hours
To books, to music, or the poet's toil;
To weaving nets for bird-alluring fruit,

Or twining silken threads round ivory reels,
When they command whom man was born to
please:
I slight thee not, but make thee welcome still.

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In such a world, so thorny, and where none
Finds happiness unblighted, or, if found,
Without some thistly sorrow at its side,
It seems the part of wisdom, and no sin
Against the law of love, to measure lots
With less distinguished than ourselves, that thus
We may with patience bear our moderate ills,
And sympathize with others, suffering more.
Ill fares the traveller now, and he that stalks
In [illegible]derous boots beside his reeking team.
The wain goes heavily, impeded sore
By congregated loads adhering close
To the clogged wheels; and in its sluggish pace
Noiseless appears a moving hill of snow.
The toiling steeds expand the nostril wide,
While every breath, by respiration strong
Forced downward, is consolidated soon
Upon their jutting chests. He, formed to bear
The pelting brunt of the tempestuous night,
With half-shut eyes and puckered cheeks, and
teeth
Presented bare against the storm, plods on.
One hand secures his hat, save when with both
He brandishes his pliant length of whip,
Resounding oft, and never heard in vain.
Oh happy! and in my account, denied
The sensibility of pain with which
Refinement is endued, thrice happy thou.
Thy frame, robust and hardy, feels indeed
The piercing cold, but feels it unimpaired.
The learnèd finger never need explore

Thy vigorous pulse; and the unhealthful ea
That breathes the spleen, and searches every
Of the infirm, is wholesome air to thee.
Thy days roll on exempt from household ca
Thy waggon is thy wife; and the poor beas
That drag the dull companion to and fro,
Thine helpless charge, dependent on thy car
Ah, treat them kindly! rude as thou appear
Yet show that thou hast mercy, which the
With needless hurry whirled from place to
Humane as they would seem, not always sh
Poor, yet industrious, modest, quiet, nea
Such claim compassion in a night like this,
And have a friend in every feeling heart.

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BOOK VI.—THE WINTER WALK AT NOON

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The night was winter in his roughest n
The morning sharp and clear. But now at
Upon the southern side of the slant hills,
And where the woods fence off the northerr
The season smiles, resigning all its rage,
And has the warmth of May. The vault i
Without a cloud, and white without a spe
The dazzling splendour of the scene belov
Again the harmony comes o'er the vale
And through the trees I view the e
tower
Whence all the music. I again perceiv
The soothing influence of the wafted s
And settle in soft musings as I tread
The walk, still verdant, under oaks a
Whose outspread branches overarch th
The roof, though moveable through al
As the wind sways it, has yet well su
And intercepting in their silent fal
The frequent flakes, has kept a path

No noise is here, or none that hinders thought.
The redbreast warbles still, but is content
With slender notes, and more than half suppressed:
Pleased with his solitude, and flitting light
From spray to spray, where'er he rests he shakes
From many a twig the pendant drops of ice,
That tinkle in the withered leaves below.
Stillness, accompanied with sounds so soft,
Charms more than silence. Meditation here
May think down hours to moments. Here the heart
May give a useful lesson to the head,
And learning wiser grow without his books.
Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
Have oftimes no connection. Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men,
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,
The mere materials with which wisdom builds,
Till smoothed and squared and fitted to its place,
Does but encumber whom it seems to enrich.
Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much;
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.

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I would not enter on my list of friends
(Though graced with polished manners and fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility) the man
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.
An inadvertent step may crush the snail
That crawls at evening in the public path;
But he that has humanity, forewarned,
Will tread aside, and let the reptile live.
The creeping vermin, loathsome to the sight,
And *charged perhaps* with venom, that intrudes,
A visitor unwelcome, into scenes

Sacred to neatness and repose, the alcove,
The chamber, or refectory, may die:
A necessary act incurs no blame.
Not so when, held within their proper bou
And guiltless of offence, they range the air,
Or take their pastime in the spacious field:
There they are privileged: and he that hun
Or harms them there is guilty of a wrong,
Disturbs the economy of nature's realm,
Who, when she formed, designed them an a
The sum is this: if man's convenience, heal
Or safety interfere, his rights and claims
Are paramount, and must extinguish theirs
Else they are all—the meanest things that
As free to live, and to enjoy that life,
As God was free to form them at the first,
Who in His sovereign wisdom made them
Ye therefore who love mercy, teach your sc
To love it too. The spring-time of our y
Is soon dishonoured and defiled in most
By budding ills, that ask a prudent hand
To check them. But, alas! none sooner sh
If unrestrained, into luxuriant growth,
Than cruelty, most devilish of them all.
Mercy to him that shows it, is the rule
And righteous limitation of its act,
By which Heaven moves in pardonin
man,
And he that shows none, being ripe in
And conscious of the outrage he commi
Shall seek it and not find it in his turn.
Distinguished much by reason, and s
By our capacity of grace divine,
From creatures that exist but for our s
Which, having served us, perish, we
Accountable, and God, some future d
***Will* reckon** with us roundly for the

Of what He deems no mean or trivial trust.
Superior as we are, they yet depend
Not more on human help than we on theirs.
Their strength, or speed, or vigilance, were given
In aid of our defects. In some are found
Such teachable and apprehensive parts,
That man's attainments in his own concerns,
Matched with the expertness of the brutes in theirs,
Are oftimes vanquished and thrown far behind.

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ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE OUT OF NORFOLK

(*Oct.* 1790)

THE GIFT OF MY COUSIN, ANN BODHAM

O That those lips had language! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
"Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!"
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
(Blessed be the art that can immortalize,
The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim
To quench it) here shines on me still the same.
Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
Who bidst me honour with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long,
I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept were her own:
And, while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
Shall steep me *in Elysian* revery,
A momentary dream, that thou art she.

My mother! when I learnt that thou wast dea
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gavest me, though unfelt, a kiss:
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah, that maternal smile! it answers—Yes.
I heard the bell tolled on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such? It was.—Where thou art go
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my conce
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wished I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived.
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
I learnt at last submission to my lot;
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.
Where once we dwelt our name is heard
more,
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapped
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capped,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we called the pastoral house our ov
Short-lived possession! But the record fair
That memory keeps, of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm that has effaced

A thousand other themes less deeply traced.
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou mightst know me safe and warmly laid;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit, or confectionery plum;
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestowed
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glowed;
All this, and more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and breaks
That humour interposed too often makes;
All this still legible in memory's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honours to thee as my numbers may;
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorned in heaven, though little noticed here.
Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
I pricked them into paper with a pin,
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head and smile.)
Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
I would not trust my heart—the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.—
But no—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved, and thou so much,
That I *should ill requite* thee to constrain
Thy unbounded spirit into bonds again.

Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
(The storms all weathered and the ocean crossed
Shoots into port at some well-haven'd isle,
Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smil
There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reached t
shore,
"Where tempests never beat nor billows roar,"
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
Of life long since has anchored by thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distressed
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-tosst
Sails ripped, seams opening wide, and compe
lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous cours
Yet, Oh, the thought that thou art safe, and
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
My boast is not, that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned and rulers of the earth
But higher far my proud pretensions rise—
The son of parents passed into the skies!
And now, farewell—Time unrevoked has run
His wonted course, yet what I wished is done
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem to have lived my childhood o'er again;
To have renewed the joys that once were m
Without the sin of violating thine:
And, while the wings of Fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimic show of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft—
Thy self removed, thy power to soothe me left

ON THE LOSS OF THE "ROYAL GEORGE"

WRITTEN WHEN THE NEWS ARRIVED, SEPTEMBER, 1782, TO THE MARCH IN "SCIPIO"

Toll for the brave!
The brave that are no more!
All sunk beneath the wave,
Fast by their native shore!

Eight hundred of the brave,
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel,
And laid her on her side.

A land-breeze shook the shrouds,
And she was overset;
Down went the *Royal George*,
With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave!
Brave Kempenfelt is gone;
His last sea-fight is fought;
His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle;
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak;
She ran upon no rock.

His sword was in its sheath;
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men.

Weigh the vessel up,
Once dreaded by our foes!
And *mingle with* our cup
The tear that England owes.

Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again
Full-charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone,
His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the wave no more.

THE CAST-AWAY

(March 20, 1799)

Obscurest night involved the sky,
The Atlantic billows roared,
When such a destined wretch as I,
Washed headlong from on board,
Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
His floating home forever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast
Than he with whom he went,
Nor ever ship left Albion's coast
With warmer wishes sent.
He loved them both, but both in vain,
Nor him beheld, nor her again.

Not long beneath the whelming brine,
Expert to swim, he lay;
Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
Or courage die away;
But waged with death a lasting strife,
Supported by despair of life.

He shouted: nor his friends had failed
To check the vessel's course,
But so the furious blast prevailed,

That, pitiless perforce,
They left their outcast mate behind,
And scudded still before the wind.

Some succor yet they could afford;
And such as storms allow,
The cask, the coop, the floated cord,
Delayed not to bestow.
But he (they knew) nor ship nor shore,
What e'er they gave, should visit more.

Nor, cruel as it seemed, could he
Their haste himself condemn,
Aware that flight, in such a sea,
Alone could rescue them;
Yet bitter felt it still to die
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives, who lives an hour
In ocean, self-upheld:
And so long he, with unspent power,
His destiny repelled;
And ever, as the minutes flew,
Entreated help, or cried—"Adieu!"

At length, his transient respite past,
His comrades, who before
Had heard his voice in every blast,
Could catch the sound no more:
For then, by toil subdued, he drank
The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him; but the page
Of narrative sincere,
That tells his name, his worth, his age,
Is wet with Anson's tear:
And tears by *bards* or heroes shed
Alike immortalize the dead.

I therefore purpose not, or dream,
Descanting on his fate,
To give the melancholy theme
A more enduring date:
But misery still delights to trace
Its semblance in another's case.

No voice divine the storm allayed,
No light propitious shone,
When, snatched from all effectual aid,
We perished, each alone:
But I beneath a rougher sea,
And whelmed in deeper gulfs than he.

William Blake

1757–1827

TO THE MUSES

(From *Poetical Sketches*, 1783)

Whether on Ida's shady brow,
Or in the chambers of the East,
The chambers of the sun that now
From ancient melody have ceased;

Whether in Heaven ye wander fair,
Or the green corners of the earth,
Or the blue regions of the air,
Where the melodious winds have birth;

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove
Beneath the bosom of the sea,
Wandering in many a coral grove;
Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry;

How have you left the ancient love
That bards of old enjoy'd in you!
The languid strings do scarcely move,
The sound is forced, the notes are few.

TO THE EVENING STAR

(From the same)

Thou fair-haired angel of the evening,
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountain, light
Thy brilliant torch of love; thy radiant crown
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed!
Smile on our loves; and whilst thou drawest round
The curtains of the sky, scatter thy dew
On every flower that closes its sweet eyes
In timely sleep. Let thy west wind sleep on
The lake; speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,
And wash the dusk with silver. Soon, full soon
Dost thou withdraw; then the wolf rages wide,
And then the lion glares through the dun forest.
The fleeces of our flocks are covered with
Thy sacred dew: protect them with thine influence.

INTRODUCTION

(From *Songs of Innocence*, 1787)

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he, laughing, said to me:

'Pipe a song about a Lamb!'
So I piped with merry cheer.
'*Piper, pipe* that song again;'
So I piped: he wept to hear.

'Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!'
So I sang the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

'Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read.'
So he vanish'd from my sight;
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stain'd the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

THE LAMB

(From the same)

Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, and bade thee feed
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little lamb, I'll tell thee;
Little lamb, I'll tell thee:
He is callèd by thy name,
For He calls Himself a Lamb.
He is meek, and He is mild,
He became a little child.

I a child and thou a lamb,
We are callèd by His name.
Little lamb, God bless thee!
Little lamb, God bless thee!

NIGHT

(From the same)

The sun descending in the west,
The evening star does shine,
The birds are silent in their nest,
And I must seek for mine.
The moon, like a flower
In heaven's high bower,
With silent delight,
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell, green fields and happy grove,
Where flocks have ta'en delight;
Where lambs have nibbled, silent move
The feet of angels bright;
Unseen, they pour blessing,
And joy without ceasing,
On each bud and blossom,
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,
Where birds are covered warm;
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them all from harm.
If they see any weeping
That should have been sleeping,
They *pour sleep on* their head,
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey
They pitying stand and weep,
Seeking to drive their thirst away,
And keep them from the sheep.
But if they rush dreadful,
The angels, most heedful,
Receive each mild spirit,
New worlds to inherit.

And there the lion's ruddy eyes
Shall flow with tears of gold:
And pitying the tender cries,
And walking round the fold:
Saying: 'Wrath by His meekness,
And by His health, sickness,
Are driven away
From our immortal day.

'And now beside thee, bleating lamb,
I can lie down and sleep,
Or think on Him who bore thy name,
Graze after thee, and weep.
For wash'd in life's river,
My bright mane forever
Shall shine like the gold,
As I guard o'er the fold.'

TO THE DIVINE IMAGE

(From the same)

To mercy, pity, peace, and love,
All pray in their distress,
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For mercy, pity, peace, and love,
  Is God our Father dear;
And mercy, pity, peace, and love,
  Is man, His child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart,
  Pity, a human face;
And Love, the human form divine;
  And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,
  That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine;
  Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,
  In heathen, Turk, or Jew;
Where mercy, love, and pity dwell,
  There God is dwelling too.

ON ANOTHER'S SORROW

(From the same)

Can I see another's woe,
And not be in sorrow too?
Can I see another's grief,
And not seek for kind relief?

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrow's share?
Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow fill'd?

Can a mother sit and hear,
An infant groan, an infant fear?
No, no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

And can He, who smiles on all,
Hear the wren, with sorrow small,
Hear the small bird's grief and care,
Hear the woes that infants bear?

And not sit beside the nest,
Pouring Pity in their breast,
And not sit the cradle near,
Weeping tear on infant's tear?

And not sit both night and day,
Wiping all our tears away?
Oh, no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

He doth give His joy to all:
He becomes an infant small
He becomes a man of woe,
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,
And thy Maker is not by:
Think not thou canst weep a tear,
And thy Maker is not near.

Oh! He gives to us His joy,
That our griefs He may destroy.
Till our grief is fled and gone
He doth sit by us and moan.

THE TIGER

(From *The Songs of Experience*, 1794)

Tiger, Tiger, burning bright
In the forest of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Framed thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burned that fire within thine eyes?
On what wings dared he aspire?
What the hand dared seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
When thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand and what dread feet?

What the hammer, what the chain,
Knit thy strength and forged thy brain?
What the anvil? What dread grasp
Dared thy deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee?

AH! SUNFLOWER

(From the same)

Ah! Sunflower! weary of time,
Who countest the steps of the sun,
Seeking after that sweet golden prime
Where the traveller's journey is done;
Where the Youth pined away with desire,
And the pale virgin shrouded in snow,
Arise from their graves, and aspire
Where my sunflower wishes to go!

Robert Burns

(1759–1796)

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

(1785)

"Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor."—*Gray.*

My lov'd, my honour'd, much respected friend
No mercenary bard his homage pays;
With honest pride, I scorn each selfish end
My dearest meed, a friend's esteem a
praise:
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequester'd scene;
The native feelings strong, the guileless
ways,
What Aiken in a cottage would have been;
Ah! tho' his worth unknown, far happier there
ween!

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;
The short'ning winter-day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh;
The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose
The toil-worn Cotter frae his labour goes,
This night his weekly moil is at an end,
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his
hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hame
ward bend.

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;
Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin', stacher through
To meet their dad, wi' flichterin' noise and glee.
His wee bit ingle, blinkin' bonily,
His clean hearth-stane, his thrifty wifie's smile,
The lisping infant, prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary kiaugh and care beguile,
And makes him quite forget his labour and his toil.

Belyve, the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, amang the farmers roun';
Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie rin
A cannie errand to a neebor town:
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman-grown,
In youthfu' bloom,—love sparkling in her e'e—
Comes hame, perhaps to shew a braw new gown,
Or deposit her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

With joy unfeign'd, brothers and sisters meet,
And each for other's weelfare kindly spiers:
The social hours, swift-wing'd, unnotic'd fleet:
Each tells the uncos that he sees or hears;
The parents partial eye their hopeful years;
Anticipation forward points the view;
The mother, wi' her needle and her shears,
Gars auld claes look amaist as weel's the new,
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

Their master's *and* their mistress's command,
The younkers a' are warned to obey:
And mind their labors wi' an eydent hand,

And ne'er, tho' out o' sight, to jauk or play;
"And O! be sure to fear the Lord alway,
And mind your duty, duly, morn and night;
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
Implore His counsel and assisting might:
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright."

But, hark! a rap comes gently to the door;
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neibor lad came o'er the moor,
To do some errands, and convoy her hame.
The wily mother sees the conscious flame
Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek;
With heart-struck anxious care enquires his name,
While Jenny hafflins is afraid to speak;
Weel-pleased the mother hears it's nae wild worthless rake.

Wi' kindly welcome, Jenny brings him ben;
A strappin youth, he takes the mother's eye;
Blythe Jenny sees the visit's no ill-ta'en;
The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye.
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
But blate an' laithfu', scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' and sae grave,
Weel-pleas'd to think her bairn's respected like the lave.

Oh, happy love! where love like this is found!
Oh, heart-felt raptures! bliss beyond compare!
I've pacèd much this weary, mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare,—

"If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare—
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale."

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart,
A wretch! a villain! lost to love and truth!
That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
Curse on his perjur'd arts! dissembling smooth!
Are honour, virtue, conscience, all exil'd?
Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
Points to the parents fondling o'er their child?
Then paints the ruin'd maid, and their distraction wild?

But now the supper crowns their simple board,
The halesome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food;
The soupe their only hawkie does afford,
That, 'yont the hallan snugly chows her cood:
The dame brings forth, in complimental mood,
To grace the lad, her weel-hain'd kebbuck, fell;
And aft he's prest, and aft he ca's it guid:
The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell
How 't was a towmond auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, with patriarchal grace,
The big ha'-bible, ance his father's pride:

His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zi
glide,
He wales a portion with judicious care;
And "Let us worship God!" he says, with soler
air.

They chant their artless notes in simple gui
They tune their hearts, by far the nobl
aim;
Perhaps 'Dundee's' wild-warbling measu
rise,
Or plaintive 'Martyrs,' worthy of the nar
Or noble 'Elgin' beets the heaven-w
flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:
Compar'd with these, Italian trills are tar
The tickl'd ears no heart-felt raptures raise
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise

The priest-like father reads the sacred page
How Abram was the friend of God on high
Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny;
Or how the royal bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire
Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire;
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,
How guiltless blood for guilty man was she
How He, who bore in Heaven the second nam
Had not on earth whereon to lay His hea
How His first followers and servants sp

The precepts sage they wrote to many a land:
How he, who lone in Patmos banishèd,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounc'd by Heaven's command.

Then kneeling down, to Heaven's Eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing,"
That thus they all shall meet in future days,
There, ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear;
While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Compar'd with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method, and of art;
When men display to congregations wide
Devotion's ev'ry grace, except the heart!
The Power, incens'd, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleas'd, the language of the soul;
And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll.

Then homeward all take off their sev'ral way;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest:
The parent-pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request,
That He who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide;
But *chiefly, in their* hearts with grace divine preside.

From scenes like these, old Scotia's grand
springs,
That makes her lov'd at home, rever'd abro
Princes and lords are but the breath of kir
" An honest man's the noblest work of Go
And certes, in fair virtue's heavenly road
The cottage leaves the palace far behind;
What is a lordling's pomp? a cumbrous lo
Disguising oft the wretch of human kinc
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refin'd!

O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven
sent,
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health, and peace, and sw
content!
And O! may Heaven their simple lives p
vent
From luxury's contagion, weak and vile!
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be ren
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around their much-lc
isle.

O Thou! who pour'd the patriotic tide,
That stream'd thro' great unhappy Wall
heart,
Who dar'd to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part:
(The patriot's God, peculiarly Thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!
Oh never, never Scotia's realm desert;
But still the patriot, and the patriot-bard
In bright succession raise, her ornament a
guard!

TO A MOUSE, ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST, WITH THE PLOUGH, NOVEMBER, 1785

Wee, sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
Wi' murd'ring pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion,
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion,
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen icker in a thrave
'S a sma' request;
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,
And never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
It's silly wa's the win's are strewin!
An' naething now to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,
Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell—
Till, *crash! the* cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turned out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch cauld!

But Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain;
The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain
For promis'd joy!

Still, thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But, och! I backward cast my e'e,
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY, ON TURNING O[N] DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH IN APRIL, 178[6]

Wee, modest, crimson-tippèd flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stour
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonie gem.

Alas! it's no thy neibor sweet,
The bonie lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,
Wi' spreckl'd breast!
When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent-earth
Thy tender form.

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
High shelt'ring woods and wa's maun shield;
But thou, beneath the random bield
O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histy stibble-field,
Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share upturns thy bed,
And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betray'd,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soil'd is laid,
Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd!
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

Such fate *to suffering* worth is given,
Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,

By human pride or cunning driv'n,
To mis'ry's brink;
Till, wrench'd of ev'ry stay but Heav'n
He, ruin'd, sink!

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern Ruin's plough-share drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weight,
Shall be thy doom!

TAM O' SHANTER

(First published 1791)

"Of Brownyis and of Bogillis full is this Buke."—G
Douglas

When chapman billies leave the street,
And drouthy neibors, neibors meet;
As market days are wearing late,
And folk begin to tak the gate,
While we sit bousing at the nappy,
An' getting fou and unco happy,
We think na on the lang Scots miles,
The mosses, waters, slaps, and stiles,
That lie between us and our hame,
Where sits our sulky, sullen dame,
Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

This truth fand honest TAM O' SHANTER,
As he frae Ayr ae night did canter:
(Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses,
For honest men and bonie lasses).

O Tam! had'st thou but been sae wise,
As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice!

She tauld thee weel thou wast a skellum;
A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum;
That frae November till October,
Ae market-day thou wasna sober;
That ilka melder wi' the Miller,
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;
That ev'ry naig was ca'd a shoe on
The Smith and thee gat roarin fou on;
That at the Lord's house, ev'n on Sunday,
Thou drank wi' Kirkton Jean till Monday;
She prophesied that late or soon,
Thou wad be found deep drown'd in Doon,
Or catch'd wi' warlocks in the mirk,
By Alloway's auld haunted kirk.

Ah, gentle dames! it gars me greet,
To think how mony counsels sweet,
How mony lengthen'd sage advices,
The husband frae the wife despises!

But to our tale:—Ae market night,
Tam had got planted unco right,
Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely,
Wi' reaming swats, that drank divinely;
And at his elbow, Souter Johnie,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony:
Tam lo'ed him like a very brither;
They had been fou for weeks thegither.
The night drave on wi' sangs an' clatter;
And aye the ale was growing better:
The Landlady and Tam grew gracious,
Wi' favours secret, sweet, and precious:
The Souter tauld his queerest stories;
The Landlord's laugh was ready chorus:
The storm without might rair and rustle,
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drown'd himsel amang the nappy.
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleas
Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorio
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious!

But pleasures are like poppies spreac
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts forever;
Or like the Borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the Rainbow's lovely form,
Evanishing amid the storm.—
Nae man can tether Time or Tide;
The hour approaches Tam maun ride:
That hour, o' night's black arch the key
That dreary hour he mounts his beast
And sic a night he taks the road in,
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

The wind blew as 't wad blawn its las
The rattling showers rose on the blast;
The speedy gleams the darkness swallow
Loud, deep, and lang the thunder bellow
That night, a child might understand,
The deil had business on his hand.

Weel-mounted on his gray mare Meg,
A better never lifted leg,
Tam skelpit on thro' dub and mire,
Despising wind, and rain, and fire;
Whiles holding fast his gude blue bonne
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots s
Whiles glow'rin round wi' prudent care
Lest bogles catch him unawares;
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
Where ghaists and houlets nightly cry.

By this time he was cross the ford,
Where in the snaw the chapman smoor'd;
And past the birks and meikle stane,
Where drunken Charlie brak's neck-bane;
And thro' the whins, and by the cairn,
Where hunters fand the murder'd bairn;
And near the thorn, aboon the well,
Where Mungo's mither hang'd hersel'.
Before him Doon pours all his floods;
The doubling storm roars thro' the woods,
The lightnings flash from pole to pole,
Near and more near the thunders roll,
When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze,
Thro' ilka bore the beams were glancing,
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.

Inspiring bold John Barleycorn!
What dangers thou canst make us scorn!
Wi' tippenny, we fear nae evil;
Wi' usquebae, we'll face the devil!
The swats sae ream'd in Tammie's noddle,
Fair play, he car'd na deils a boddle,
But Maggie stood, right sair astonish'd,
Till, by the heel and hand admonish'd,
She ventur'd forward on the light;
And, wow! Tam saw an unco sight!

Warlocks and witches in a dance:
Nae cotillion, brent new frae France,
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
Put life and mettle in their heels.
A winnock-bunker in the east,
There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast;
A towzie tyke, black, grim, and large,
To gie them music was his charge;
He screw'd the pipes and gart them skirl,

Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.
Coffins stood round, like open presses,
That shaw'd the Dead in their last dresses;
And (by some devilish cantraip sleight)
Each in its cauld hand held a light.
By which heroic Tam was able
To note upon the haly table,
A murderer's banes, in gibbet-airns;
Twa span-lang, wee, unchristened bairns;
A thief, new-cutted frae a rape,
Wi' his last gasp his gab did gape;
Five tomahawks, wi' blude red-rusted;
Five scimitars, wi' murder crusted;
A garter which a babe had strangled:
A knife, a father's throat had mangled,
Whom his ain son of life bereft,
The gray-hairs yet stack to the heft;
Wi' mair of horrible and awfu',
Which even to name wad be unlawfu'.

As Tammie glowr'd amaz'd, and curious,
The mirth and fun grew fast and furious;
The Piper loud and louder blew,
The dancers quick and quicker flew;
They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleek
Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,
And coost her duddies to the wark,
And linket at it in her sark!

Now Tam, O Tam! had thae been queans,
A' plump and strapping in their teens!
Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flainen,
Been snaw-white seventeen-hunder linen!—
Thir breeks o' mine, my only pair,
That ance were plush, o' guid blue hair,
I wad hae gi'en them off my hurdies,
For ae blink o' the bonie burdies!

But wither'd beldams, auld and droll,
Rigwoodie hags wad spean a foal,
Louping an' flinging on a crummock,
I wonder didna turn thy stomach.
But Tam kennt what was what fu' brawlie;
There was ae winsome wench and waulie,
That night enlisted in the core,
Lang after ken'd on Carrick shore;
(For mony a beast to dead she shot,
And perish'd mony a bonie boat,
And shook baith meikle corn and bear,
And kept the country-side in fear);
Her cutty sark, o' Paisley harn,
That while a lassie she had worn,
In longitude tho' sorely scanty,
It was her best, and she was vauntie.
Ah! little ken'd thy reverend grannie,
That sark she coft for her wee Nannie,
Wi' twa pund Scots ('twas a' her riches),
Wad ever grac'd a dance o' witches!
But here my Muse her wing maun cour,
Sic flights are far beyond her power;
To sing how Nannie lap and flang,
(A souple jade she was and strang),
And how Tam stood, like ane bewitch'd,
And thought his very een enrich'd:
Even Satan glowr'd and fidg'd fu' fain,
And hotch'd and blew wi' might and main:
Till first ae caper, syne anither,
Tam tint his reason a' thegither,
And roars out, "Weel done, Cutty-sark!"
And in an instant all was dark:
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
When out the hellish legion sallied.

As bees *bizz out* wi' angry fyke,
When plundering herds assail their byke;

As open pussie's mortal foes,
When, pop! she starts before their nose;
As eager runs the market-crowd,
When "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud;
So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
Wi' mony an eldritch skreich and hollow.

Ah, Tam! ah, Tam! thou 'll get thy fairin!
In hell they 'll roast thee like a herrin!
In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin!
Kate soon will be a woefu' woman!
Now, do thy speedy-utmost, Meg,
And win the key-stane o' the brig;
There, at them thou thy tail may toss,
A running stream they darena cross!
But ere the key-stane she could make,
The fient a tail she had to shake!
For Nannie, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;
But little wist she Maggie's mettle!
Ae spring brought off her master hale,
But left behind her ain gray tail:
The carlin claught her by the rump,
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk man, and mother's son, take heed:
Whene'er to Drink you are inclin'd,
Or Cutty-sarks rin in your mind,
Think ye may buy the joys o'er dear;
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare.

BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS ARMY AT BANNOCKBURN

(1793)

Scots, wha hae wi' WALLACE bled,
Scots, wham BRUCE has often led;
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to Victorie!

Now's the day, and now's the hour;
See the front o' battle lour;
See approach proud EDWARD'S power—
Chains and Slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!

Wha, for Scotland's King and Law,
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
FREEMAN stand, or FREEMAN fa',
Let him on wi' me!

By Oppression's woes and pains!
By your Sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

Lay the proud Usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
LIBERTY'S in every blow!—
Let us Do or Die!

THE BANKS OF DOON

(Second version, 1791)

Ye flowery banks o' bonie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings upon the bough!
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause Luve was true.

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Aft hae I rov'd by bonie Doon,
To see the woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its Luve,
And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Upon its thorny tree;
But my fause Luver staw the rose,
And left the thorn wi' me.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Upon a morn in June;
And sae I flourished on the morn,
And sae was pu'd or noon.

A RED, RED ROSE

(1793)

O my Luve's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June:
O my Luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun:
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare-thee-weel, my only Luve!
And fare-thee-weel awhile!
And I will come again, my Luve,
Tho' 't were ten thousand mile!

IS THERE, FOR HONEST POVERTY

(1795)

(Tune—"For a' that")

Is there for honest Poverty,
That hings his head, an' a' that;
The coward slave—we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
Our toils obscure an' a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The Man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hoddin grey, an' a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their w
A Man's a Man for a' that:
For a' that, an' a' that,
Their tinsel show, an' a' that;
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie ca'd a lord,
Wha struts, an' stares an' a' that;
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a' that:
For a' that, an' a' that,
His ribband, star, an' a' that:
The man o' independent mind,
He looks an' laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, an' a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Guid faith, he maunna fa' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
Their dignities an' a' that;
The pith o' sense, an' pride o' worth,
Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
(As come it will for a' that,)
That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth
Shall bear the gree, an' a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
It's coming yet for a' that,
That Man to Man, the warld o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

O, WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST

(1796)

O wert thou in the cauld blast,
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee;
Or did Misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
Thy bield should be my bosom,
To share it a', to share it a'.

Or were I in the wildest waste,
Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
The desert were a Paradise,
If thou wert there, if thou wert there;
Or were I monarch o' the globe,
Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The brightest jewel in my Crown
Wad be my Queen, wad be my Queen.

William Wordsworth

1770–1850

LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR

(July 13, 1798)

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a sweet inland murmur.—Once again
Do *I behold these steep* and lofty cliffs,

That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchar
tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lir
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farr
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smok
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some hermit's cave, where by his fire
The hermit sits alone.
These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration:—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
In which the burden of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,

Is lightened:—that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul;
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.
If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft—
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! Thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For Nature *then*

(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all.—I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Nor for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I
still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty
world
Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize

In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.
Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
For thou art with me here upon the banks
Of this fair river; thou, my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain-winds be free
To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,

Should be thy portion, with what heal
thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance-
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes tl
gleams
Of past existence—wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love—oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor will thou then forget,
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to m
More dear, both for themselves and for th
sake!

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY

(1798)

"Why, William, on that old gray stone
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away?

Where are your books?—that light bequeathe
To Beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

You look round on your Mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply:

"The eye—it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.

Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things forever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking?

—Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old gray stone,
And dream my time away."

THE TABLES TURNED

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT

(1798)

Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you 'll grow double:
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through *all the long* green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

THREE YEARS SHE GREW

(1799)

Three years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This Child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own.

Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm,
Grace that shall mold the Maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature *spake*—*The* work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!

She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN W

(1799)

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

MICHAEL

A Pastoral Poem

(1800)

If from the public way you turn your steps
Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Gh
You will suppose that with an upright pat
Your feet must struggle; in such bold ascen
The pastoral mountains front you, face to f
But, courage! for around that boisterous b
The mountains have all opened out themsel
And made a hidden valley of their own.

No habitation can be seen; but they
Who journey thither find themselves alone
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites
That overhead are sailing in the sky.
It is in truth an utter solitude;
Nor should I have made mention of this Dell
But for one object which you might pass by,
Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones:
And to that simple object appertains
A story unenriched with strange events,
Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,
Or for the summer shade. It was the first
Of those domestic tales that spake to me
Of Shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
Whom I already loved:—not verily
For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
Where was their occupation and abode.
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy
Careless of books, yet having felt the power
Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects, led me on to feel
For passions that were not my own, and think
(At random and imperfectly indeed)
On man, the heart of man, and human life.
Therefore, although it be a history
Homely and rude, I will relate the same
For the delight of a few natural hearts;
And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
Of youthful Poets, who among these hills
Will be my second self when I am gone.

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere Vale
There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name;
An old *man, stout of* heart, and strong of limb.
His bodily frame had been from youth to age

Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
And watchful more than ordinary men.
Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds
Of blasts of every tone; and, oftentimes,
When others heeded not, he heard the South
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
"The winds are now devising work for me!"
And, truly, at all times, the storm, that drives
The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
Up to the mountains: he had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him, and left him, on the heights
So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams and rock
Were things indifferent to the Shepherd
thoughts.
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he ha
breathed
The common air; hills, which with vigorous st
He had so often climbed; which had impressed
So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;
Which, like a book, preserved the memory
Of the dumb animals whom he had saved,
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
The certainty of honourable gain,
Those fields, those hills—what could they less
had laid
Strong hold on his affections, were to him
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.
His Helpmate was a comely matron, old—
Though younger than himself full twenty years.
She was a woman of a stirring life,
Whose heart was in her house: two wheels she had
Of antique form; this large, for spinning wool;
That small, for flax; and if one wheel had rest,
It was because the other was at work.
The Pair had but one inmate in their house,
An only Child, who had been born to them
When Michael, telling o'er his years, began
To deem that he was old,—in shepherd's phrase,
With one foot in the grave. This only Son,
With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a storm,
The one of an inestimable worth,
Made all their household. I may truly say
That they were as a proverb in the vale
For endless industry. When day was gone,
And from their occupations out of doors
The Son and Father were come home, even then,
Their labor did not cease; unless when all
Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and there,
Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk,
Sat round the basket piled with oaten cakes,
And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when the meal
Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was named)
And his old Father both betook themselves
To such convenient work as might employ
Their hands by the fire-side; perhaps to card
Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair
Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,
Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge,
That *in our ancient* uncouth country style
With huge and black projection overbrowed

Large space beneath, as duly as the light
Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a lamp;
An aged utensil, which had performed
Service beyond all others of its kind.
Early at evening did it burn—and late,
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
Which, going by from year to year, had found,
And left the couple neither gay perhaps
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,
Living a life of eager industry.
And now, when Luke had reached his eighteen year,
There by the light of this old lamp they sat,
Father and Son, while far into the night
The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,
Making the cottage through the silent hours
Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.
This light was famous in its neighborhood,
And was a public symbol of the life
That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanc
Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
Stood single, with large prospect, north and sou
High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,
And westward to the village near the lake;
And from this constant light, so regular
And so far seen, the House itself, by all
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
Both old and young, was named The Eveni Star.

Thus living on through such a length of yea
The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs
Have loved his Helpmate; but to Michael's hea
This son of his old age was yet more dear—
Less from instinctive tenderness, the same
Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood
all—
Than that a child, more than all other gifts

That earth can offer to declining man,
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,
And stirrings of inquietude, when they
By tendency of nature needs must fail.
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,
His heart and his heart's joy! For oftentimes
Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
Had done him female service, not alone
For pastime and delight, as is the use
Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked
His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand.
And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy
Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love,
Albeit of a stern unbending mind,
To have the Young one in his sight, when he
Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's stool
Sate with a fettered sheep before him stretched
Under the large old oak, that near his door
Stood single, and, from matchless depth of shade
Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the sun,
Thence in our rustic dialect was called
The Clipping Tree, a name which yet it bears.
There while they two were sitting in the shade,
With others round them, earnest all and blithe,
Would Michael exercise his heart with looks
Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep
By catching at their legs, or with his shouts
Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the boy grew up
A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek
Two steady roses that were five years old;

Then Michael from a winter coppice cut
With his own hand a sapling, which he hoopec
With iron, making it throughout in all
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,
And gave it to the Boy; wherewith equipt
He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock;
And, to his office prematurely called,
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
Something between a hindrance and a help;
And for this cause not always, I believe,
Receiving from his Father hire of praise;
Though naught was left undone which staff,
voice,
Or looks, or threatening gestures, could perfor

But soon, as Luke, full ten years old, cou
stand
Against the mountain blasts, and to the height
Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,
He with his Father daily went, and they
Were as companions, why should I relate
That objects which the Shepherd loved before
Were dearer now? that from the Boy there can
Feelings and emanations—things which were
Light to the sun and music to the wind:
And that the old Man's heart seemed born agai

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew up;
And now, when he had reached his eighteer
year,
He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household lived
From day to day, to Michael's ear there came
Distressful tidings. Long before the time
Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been bow

In surety for his brother's son, a man
Of an industrious life, and ample means;
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
Had prest upon him; and old Michael now
Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,
A grievous penalty, but little less
Than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim,
At the first hearing, for a moment took
More hope out of his life than he supposed
That any old man ever could have lost.
As soon as he had armed himself with strength
To look his trouble in the face, it seemed
The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once
A portion of his patrimonial fields.
Such was his first resolve; he thought again,
And his heart failed him. "Isabel," said he,
Two evenings after he had heard the news,
"I have been toiling more than seventy years,
And in the open sunshine of God's love
Have we all lived; yet if these fields of ours
Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think
That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
Our lot is a hard lot; the sun himself
Has scarcely been more diligent than I;
And I have lived to be a fool at last
To my own family. An evil man
That was, and made an evil choice, if he
Were false to us; and if he were not false,
There are ten thousand to whom loss like this
Had been no sorrow. I forgive him;—but
'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.

When I began, my purpose was to speak
Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.
Our *Luke shall leave* us, Isabel; the land
Shall not go from us, and it shall be free;

He shall possess it free as is the wind
That passes over it. We have, thou know's
Another kinsman—he will be our friend
In this distress. He is a prosperous man,
Thriving in trade—and Luke to him shall g
And with his kinsman's help and his own th
He quickly will repair this loss, and then
He may return to us. If here he stay,
What can be done? Where everyone is po
What can be gained?"
At this the old Man pa
And Isabel sat silent, for her mind
Was busy, looking back into past times.
There's Richard Bateman, thought she to he
He was a parish-boy—at the church-door
They made a gathering for him, shillings, I
And half pennies, wherewith the neigl
bought
A basket, which they filled with peddler's w
And, with this basket on his arm, the lad
Went up to London, found a master there,
Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy
To go and overlook his merchandise
Beyond the seas; where he grew wondrous r
And left estates and moneys to the poor,
And, at his birth-place, built a chapel, floor
With marble, which he sent from foreign l
These thoughts, and many others of like sor
Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,
And her face brightened. The old Man was
And thus resumed:—"Well, Isabel! this sch
These two days, has been meat and drink to r
Far more than we have lost is left us yet.
—We have enough—I wish indeed that I
Were younger;—but this hope is a good hop
—Make ready Luke's best garments, of the
Buy for him more, and let us send him forth

To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:
If he *could* go, the boy should go to-night."
Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth
With a light heart. The Housewife for five days
Was restless morn and night, and all day long
Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare
Things needful for the journey of her son.
But Isabel was glad when Sunday came
To stop her in her work: for, when she lay
By Michael's side, she through the last two nights
Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep:
And when they rose at morning she could see
That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon
She said to Luke, while they two by themselves
Were sitting at the door, "Thou must not go:
We have no other Child but thee to lose,
None to remember—do not go away;
For if thou leave thy Father, he will die."
The youth made answer with a jocund voice;
And Isabel, when she had told her fears,
Recovered heart. That evening her best fare
Did she bring forth, and all together sat
Like happy people round a Christmas fire.
With daylight Isabel resumed her work
And all the ensuing week the house appeared
As cheerful as a grove in Spring: at length
The expected letter from their kinsman came,
With kind assurances that he would do
His utmost for the welfare of the Boy;
To which, requests were added, that forthwith
He might be sent to him. Ten times or more
The letter was read over; Isabel
Went forth to show it to the neighbors round;
Nor was there at that time on English land
A prouder heart *than* Luke's. When Isabel
Had to her house returned, the old Man said,

"He shall depart to-morrow." To t
The Housewife answered, talking mu
Which, if at such short notice he sh
Would surely be forgotten. But at
She gave consent, and Michael was
Near the tumultuous brook of
Ghyll,
In that deep valley, Michael had des
To build a Sheep-fold; and, before
The tidings of his melancholy loss,
For this same purpose he had gather
A heap of stones, which by the stre
Lay thrown together, ready for the
With Luke that evening thitherward
And soon as they had reached th
stopped,
And thus the old Man spake to him:
To-morrow thou wilt leave me: wit
I look upon thee, for thou art the sa
That wert a promise to me ere thy b
And all thy life hast been my daily j
I will relate to thee some little part
Of our two histories; 'twill do thee
When thou art from me, even if I s
On things thou canst not know of.—
First camest into the world—as oft
To new-born infants—thou didst sle
Two days, and blessings from thy Fat
Then fell upon thee. Day by day p
And still I loved thee with increasin
Never to living ear came sweeter sou
Than when I heard thee by our own
First uttering, without words, a natu
While thou, a feeding babe, didst in t
Sing at thy mother's breast. Mon
month,
And in the open fields my life was

And on the mountains; else I think that thou
Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's knees.
But we were playmates, Luke: among these hills,
As well thou knowest, in us the old and young
Have played together, nor with me didst thou
Lack any pleasure which a boy can know."
Luke had a manly heart; but at these words
He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped his hand,
And said, "Nay, do not take it so—I see
That these are things of which I need not speak.
Even to the utmost I have been to thee
A kind and a good Father: And herein
I but repay a gift which I myself
Received at others' hands; for, though now old
Beyond the common life of man, I still
Remember them who loved me in my youth.
Both of them sleep together: here they lived,
As all their Forefathers had done; and when
At length their time was come, they were not loth
To give their bodies to the family mould.
I wished that thou shouldst live the life they lived:
But, 'tis a long time to look back, my Son,
And see so little gain from threescore years.
These fields were burdened when they came to me;
Till I was forty years of age, not more
Than half of my inheritance was mine.
I toiled and toiled; God blessed me in my work,
And till these three weeks past the land was free.
It looks as if it never could endure
Another Master. Heaven forgive me, Luke,
If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good
That thou should'st go."
At this the old man paused.
Then, pointing to the stones near which they *stood*

Thus, after a short silence, he resumed:
"This was a work for us; and now, my Son,
It is a work for me. But, lay one stone—
Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own hand
Nay, Boy, be of good hope;—we both may live
To see a better day. At eighty-four
I am strong and hale;—Do thou thy part;
I will do mine.—I will begin again
With many tasks that were resigned to thee:
Up to the heights, and in among the storms,
Will I without thee go again, and do
All works which I was wont to do alone,
Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless thee, Bo
Thy heart these two weeks has been beating fa
With many hopes; it should be so—yes—yes—
I knew that thou couldst never have a wish
To leave me, Luke: thou hast been bound to m
Only by links of love: When thou art gone,
What will be left to us!—But, I forget
My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,
As I requested; and hereafter, Luke,
When thou art gone away, should evil men
Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,
And of this moment: hither turn thy thought
And God will strengthen thee: amid all fear
And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou
Mayst bear in mind the life thy Fathers lived
Who, being innocent, did for that cause
Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee we
When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt s
A work which is not here—a covenant
'Twill be between us; but, whatever fate
Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,
And bear thy memory with me to the grave.'

The Shepherd ended here; and Luke stoo
down,

And, as his Father had requested, laid
The first stone of the Sheep-fold. At the sight
The old Man's grief broke from him; to his heart
He pressed his Son, he kissèd him and wept;
And to the house together they returned.
Hushed was that House in peace, or seeming peace,
Ere the night fell:—with morrow's dawn the Boy
Began his journey, and when he had reached
The public way, he put on a bold face;
And all the neighbors, as he passed their doors,
Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,
That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their Kinsman come,
Of Luke and his well-doing: and the Boy
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,
Which, as the Housewise phrased it, were throughout
"The prettiest letters that were ever seen."
Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.
So, many months passed on; and once again
The Shepherd went about his daily work
With confident and cheerful thoughts; and now
Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour
He to that valley took his way, and there
Wrought at the Sheep-fold. Meantime Luke began
To slacken in his duty; and, at length,
He in the dissolute city gave himself
To evil courses: ignominy and shame
Fell on him, so that he was driven at last
To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love;
'Twill make a thing endurable, which else
Would overset the brain, or break the heart:
I have conversed with more than one who well
Remember the old Man, and what he was

Years after he had heard this heavy news.
His bodily frame had been from youth to a
Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks
He went, and still looked up to sun and clo
And listened to the wind; and, as before,
Performed all kinds of labor for his sheep,
And for the land, his small inheritance.
And to that hollow dell from time to time
Did he repair, to build the Fold of which
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet
The pity which was then in every heart
For the old Man—and 'tis believed by all
That many and many a day he thither went,
And never lifted up a single stone.
There, by the Sheep-fold, sometimes wa
seen,
Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
The length of full seven years, from time to
He at the building of this Sheep-fold wroug
And left the work unfinished when he died.
Three years, or little more, did Isabel
Survive her husband: at her death the estat
Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.
The Cottage which was named The Evening
Is gone—the plowshare has been through
ground
On which it stood; great changes have
wrought
In all the neighborhood:—yet the oak is lef
That grew beside their door; and the remair
Of the unfinished Sheep-fold may be seen
Beside the boisterous brook of Green-head G

MY HEART LEAPS UP

(1807)

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

THE SOLITARY REAPER

(1807)

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O, listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, *unhappy, far*-off things,
And battles long ago:

Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

ODE

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

(1803–6)

I.

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II.

The Rainbow comes and goes
And lovely is the Rose,
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;

The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

III.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong:
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday;—
Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy Shepherd-boy!

IV.

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
O evil day! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning,
This sweet May-morning,
And *the Children* are culling
On every side,

In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines w
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arn
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
—But there's a Tree, of many, one,
A single Field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is go
The Pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

V.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But He beholds the light, and whence it flow
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the ea
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

VI.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kin

And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size!
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art;
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little Actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

VIII.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy Soul's immensity;
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,

That, deaf and silent, read'st the ete
Haunted forever by the eternal min
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do re
Which we are toiling all our lives to
In darkness lost, the darkness of the
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a
A Presence which is not to be put by
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being
Why with such earnest pains dost tho
The years to bring the inevitable yok
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earl
And custom lie upon thee with a wei
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as

IX.

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at re
With new-fledged hope still flutter
breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and prais
But for those obstinate questioni
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realized

High instincts before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

X.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now forever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of *splendour in the grass*, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find

Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills a
Groves,
Forebode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the Brooks which down their channels f
Even more than when I tripped lightly as th
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet;
The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are w
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

"I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD"

(1807)

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude:
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

"SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT"

(1807)

She was a Phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely Apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes are stars of Twilight fair;
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!
Her household *motions* light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty;

A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A Creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and sm

And now I see with eyes serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and sk
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light.

ODE TO DUTY

(1807)

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou, who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free;
And calm'st the weary strife of frail hur

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad Hearts! without reproach or blot;
Who do thy work, and know it not.
Long may the kindly impulse last!
But thou, if they should totter, teach
stand fast!

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And they a blissful course may hold
Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried;
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust:
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control;
But in the quietness of thought:
Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance-desires:
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face:
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
And the most ancient heavens, through Thee, are *fresh and strong.*

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
Oh, let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of truth thy Bondman
live!

SONNETS

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 18

O Friend! I know not which way I must
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,
To think that now our life is only drest
For show; mean handy-work of craftsman,
Or groom!—We must run glittering like a
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:
The wealthiest man among us is the best:
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry: and these we adore:
Plain living and high thinking are no more
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household la

LONDON, 1802

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this ho
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bowe
Have forfeited their ancient English dowe
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, p

Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

"WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN MEMORY"

(1802)

When I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
I had, my Country!—am I to be blamed?
Now, when I think of Thee, and what Thou art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed,
For dearly must we prize thee; we who find
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
And I by my affection was beguiled:
What wonder if a Poet now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE,

SEPTEMBER 3, 1802

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In *his first splendour* valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!

The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

COMPOSED UPON THE BEACH, NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free;
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea.
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine.
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

"THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US" (1806)

The world is too much with us: late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

1772–1834

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

IN SEVEN PARTS

(From the *Lyrical Ballads*, 1798)

Argument

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.

PART I.

The ancient Mariner meeteth three Gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one.

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three,
'By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,
'There was a ship,' quoth he.
'Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!'
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The Wedding-Guest is spellbound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyes Mariner.

'The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the line.

The sun came up upon the left
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—'
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The Wedding-Guest heareth the bridal music; but the Mariner continueth his tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The ship driven by a storm toward the south pole.

'And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow

Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

e land of ice,
l of fearful
nds where
living thing
s to be seen.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound!

great sea-
called the
ross, came
gh the
fog, and
ceived
reat joy
spitality.

At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!

d the Al-
s proveth
of good
and fol-
the ship
turned
ward
h fog and
ice.

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine.'

The ancient Mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.

'God save thee, ancient Mariner!
From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—
Why look'st thou so?'—With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.

PART II.

The Sun now rose upon the right;
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo!

His shipmates cry out against the ancient Mariner, for killing the bird of good luck.

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!

But when the fog cleared off, they justify the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the *crime.*

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay
That bring the fog and mist.

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The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

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enly

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, everywhere,
Alba-
gins to
ged.

And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

A spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

And some in dreams assured were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III.

The shipmates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

There passed a weary time. Each th
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

The ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a [illegible]: *and at a* [illegible] *he*

With throats unslaked, with black baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;

n the hirst. Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail! a sail!

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:
oy. Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

· fol- ;an it ıat ard nd or See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

The western wave was all a-flame.
The day was well-nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

him ;le- ip. And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are *those her sails* that glance in the sun,
Like restless gossameres?

And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting Sun. The Spectre-Woman and her death-mate, and no other on board the skeleton ship. Like vessel, like crew!

Are those her ribs through which the sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that woman's mate?

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

Death and Life-in-Death have diced for the ship's crew, and she (the latter) winneth the ancient Mariner.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
'The game is done! I've won! I've won!'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

No twilight within the courts of the Sun.

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out;
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

At the rising of the Moon,

We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white;
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

one after another;

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,

Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

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Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

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The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!

PART IV.

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fear eth
spirit is
to him;

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown.'—

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Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

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alm.

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

and envieth that they should live, and so many lie dead.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea a
the sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked
me
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curs
And yet I could not die.

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;

But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

PART V.

Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from heaven,
That slid into my soul.

By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with de
And when I awoke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth sounds and seeth strange sights and commotions in the sky and the element.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.
And the coming wind did roar more lou
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one bla
cloud;
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and stil
The Moon was at its side:
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The bodies of the ship's crew are inspired, and the ship moves on;

The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The body and I pulled at one rope
But he said nought to me.

but not by the souls of the men, nor by dæmons of earth or middle air, but by a blessed troop of angelic spirits, sent down by the invocation of the guardian saint.

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!'
Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

For when it dawned—they dropped their arms,
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome Spirit from the south-pole carries on the ship as far as the line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:

But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard and in my soul discerned,
Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?
By Him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

'The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'

PART VI.

FIRST VOICE

'But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing?'

SECOND VOICE

'Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grin
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

FIRST VOICE

The Mariner hath been cast into a trance; for the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life could endure.

'But why drives on that ship so fa
Without or wave or wind?'

SECOND VOICE

'The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will g
When the Mariner's trance is aba

The supernatural motion is retarded; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the Mo
high,
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is finally expiated.

And now this spell was snapt: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

The ancient Mariner beholdeth his native country.

Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The lighthouse top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no le
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with s
light
Till rising from the same,
The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies, Full many shapes, that shadows were
In crimson colours came.

and appear in their own forms of light. A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turned my eyes upon the deck—
Oh Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his ha
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his ha
No voice did they impart—

No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.
The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART VII.

Hermit of wood

This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
'Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and *fair,*
That signal made but now?'

approacheth the ship with wonder.

'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said—
'And they answered not our cheer!
The planks look warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

'Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-feared'—'Push on, push on!'
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

The ship suddenly sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient Mariner is saved in the Pilot's boat.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

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entreateth
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'e him;
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falls on

'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!'
The Hermit crossed his brow.
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

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land *to*

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till *my* ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to la
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from th
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the brid
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feas
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father be
Old men, and babes, and loving f
And youths and maidens gay!

and to teach, by his own example, love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

THE GOOD GREAT MAN

(1802)

COMPLAINT

'How seldom, friend! a good great man inherits
Honour or wealth with all his worth and pains!
It sounds like stories from the land of spirits
If any man obtain that which he merits
Or any merit that which he obtains.'

REPLY

For shame, dear friend, renounce this canting strain!
What would'st thou have a good great man obtain?
Place? titles? salary? a gilded chain?
Or throne of corses which his sword had slain?
Greatness and goodness are not *means*, but *ends!*
Hath he not always treasures, always friends,
The good great man? *three* treasures, LOVE and LIGHT,
And CALM THOUGHTS, regular as infants' breath:
And three firm friends, more sure than day and night—
HIMSELF, his MAKER, and the ANGEL DEATH!

YOUTH AND AGE
(1822–1832)

Verse, a breeze mid blossoms straying,
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
Both were mine! Life went a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young!
When I was young?—Ah, woful When!
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then
This breathing house not built with hands
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,
How lightly *then* it flashed along:—
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide!
Nought cared this body for wind or weath
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
O! the joys, that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old.

Ere I was old? Oh woful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!
O Youth! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be that Thou art gone!
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd:—
And thou wert aye a masker bold!
What strange disguise hast now put on,
To *make* believe, that Thou art gone?

I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this altered size:
But Spring-tide blossoms on thy lips
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve,
When we are old:
That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave,
Like some poor nigh-related guest,
That may not rudely be dismist;
Yet hath outstay'd his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

WORK WITHOUT HOPE

(February 21st, 1827)

All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—
The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—
And Winter slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
And I the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.
Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,
Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar flow.
Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye may,
For me ye bloom *not*! Glide, rich streams, away!
With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I stroll:

And would you learn the spells that drow
soul?
Work without Hope draws nectar in a sieve
And Hope without an object cannot live.

Robert Southey

1774–1843

THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM

(Written at Westbury, 1798)

I.

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun,
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

II.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round,
Which he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found;
He came to ask what he had found,
That was so large, and smooth, and round.

III.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh,
"'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he,
"Who fell in the great victory.

IV.

"I find them in the garden,
For there's many hereabout;
And often when I go to plough,
The ploughshare turns them out!
For many thousand men," said he,
"Were slain in that great victory."

V.

"Now tell us what 't was all about,"
Young Peterkin, he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes;
"Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for."

VI.

"It was the English," Kaspar cried,
"Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for,
I could not well make out;
But every body said," quoth he,
"That 'twas a famous victory.

VII.

"My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by;
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly;
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

VIII.

"With fire and sword the country round
Was *wasted far and* wide,
And many a childing mother then

And new-born baby died;
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

IX.

"They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun;
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

X.

"Great praise the Duke of Marlboro' won,
And our good Prince Eugene."
"Why 'twas a very wicked thing!"
Said little Wilhelmine.
"Nay . . nay . . my little girl," quoth
"It was a famous victory.

XI.

"And every body praised the Duke
Who this great fight did win."
"But what good came of it at last?"
Quoth little Peterkin.
"Why that I cannot tell," said he,
"But 'twas a famous victory."

MY DAYS AMONG THE DEAD ARE PA

(Written at Keswick, 1818)

I.

My days among the Dead are past;
Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,

The mighty minds of old;
My never-failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.

II.

With them I take delight in weal,
And seek relief in woe;
And while I understand and feel
How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedew'd
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

III.

My thoughts are with the Dead; with them
I live in long-past years;
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
Partake their hopes and fears,
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with an humble mind.

IV.

My hopes are with the Dead; anon
My place with them will be,
And I with them shall travel on
Through all Futurity:
Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
That will not perish in the dust.

Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again
Full-charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone,
His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the wave no more.

THE CAST-AWAY

(March 20, 1799)

Obscurest night involved the sky,
The Atlantic billows roared,
When such a destined wretch as I,
Washed headlong from on board,
Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
His floating home forever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast
Than he with whom he went,
Nor ever ship left Albion's coast
With warmer wishes sent.
He loved them both, but both in vain,
Nor him beheld, nor her again.

Not long beneath the whelming brine,
Expert to swim, he lay;
Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
Or courage die away;
But waged with death a lasting strife,
Supported by despair of life.

He shouted: nor his friends had failed
To check the vessel's course,
But so the furious blast prevailed,

That, pitiless perforce,
They left their outcast mate behind,
And scudded still before the wind.

Some succor yet they could afford;
And such as storms allow,
The cask, the coop, the floated cord,
Delayed not to bestow.
But he (they knew) nor ship nor shore,
What e'er they gave, should visit more.

Nor, cruel as it seemed, could he
Their haste himself condemn,
Aware that flight, in such a sea,
Alone could rescue them;
Yet bitter felt it still to die
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives, who lives an hour
In ocean, self-upheld:
And so long he, with unspent power,
His destiny repelled;
And ever, as the minutes flew,
Entreated help, or cried—"Adieu!"

At length, his transient respite past,
His comrades, who before
Had heard his voice in every blast,
Could catch the sound no more:
For then, by toil subdued, he drank
The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him; but the page
Of narrative sincere,
That tells his name, his worth, his age,
Is wet with Anson's tear:
And tears by *bards* or heroes shed
Alike immortalize the dead.

I therefore purpose not, or dream,
Descanting on his fate,
To give the melancholy theme
A more enduring date:
But misery still delights to trace
Its semblance in another's case.

No voice divine the storm allayed,
No light propitious shone,
When, snatched from all effectual aid,
We perished, each alone:
But I beneath a rougher sea,
And whelmed in deeper gulfs than he.

William Blake

1757–1827

TO THE MUSES

(From *Poetical Sketches*, 1783)

Whether on Ida's shady brow,
Or in the chambers of the East,
The chambers of the sun that now
From ancient melody have ceased;

Whether in Heaven ye wander fair,
Or the green corners of the earth,
Or the blue regions of the air,
Where the melodious winds have birth;

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove
Beneath the bosom of the sea,
Wandering in many a coral grove;
Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry;

How have you left the ancient love
That bards of old enjoy'd in you!
The languid strings do scarcely move,
The sound is forced, the notes are few.

TO THE EVENING STAR

(From the same)

Thou fair-haired angel of the evening,
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountain, light
Thy brilliant torch of love; thy radiant crown
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed!
Smile on our loves; and whilst thou drawest round
The curtains of the sky, scatter thy dew
On every flower that closes its sweet eyes
In timely sleep. Let thy west wind sleep on
The lake; speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,
And wash the dusk with silver. Soon, full soon
Dost thou withdraw; then the wolf rages wide,
And then the lion glares through the dun forest.
The fleeces of our flocks are covered with
Thy sacred dew: protect them with thine influence.

INTRODUCTION

(From *Songs of Innocence*, 1787)

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he, laughing, said to me:

'Pipe a song about a Lamb!'
So I piped with merry cheer.
'Piper, pipe that song again;'
So I piped: he wept to hear.

'Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!'
So I sang the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

'Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read.'
So he vanish'd from my sight;
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stain'd the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

THE LAMB

(From the same)

Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, and bade thee feed
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little lamb, I'll tell thee;
Little lamb, I'll tell thee:
He is callèd by thy name,
For He calls Himself a Lamb.
He is meek, and He is mild,
He became a little child.

I a child and thou a lamb,
We are callèd by His name.
Little lamb, God bless thee!
Little lamb, God bless thee!

NIGHT

(From the same)

The sun descending in the west,
The evening star does shine,
The birds are silent in their nest,
And I must seek for mine.
The moon, like a flower
In heaven's high bower,
With silent delight,
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell, green fields and happy grove,
Where flocks have ta'en delight;
Where lambs have nibbled, silent move
The feet of angels bright;
Unseen, they pour blessing,
And joy without ceasing,
On each bud and blossom,
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,
Where birds are covered warm;
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them all from harm.
If they see any weeping
That should have been sleeping,
They pour sleep on their head,
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey
They pitying stand and weep,
Seeking to drive their thirst away,
And keep them from the sheep.
  But if they rush dreadful,
  The angels, most heedful,
  Receive each mild spirit,
  New worlds to inherit.

And there the lion's ruddy eyes
Shall flow with tears of gold:
And pitying the tender cries,
And walking round the fold:
  Saying: 'Wrath by His meekness,
  And by His health, sickness,
  Are driven away
  From our immortal day.

'And now beside thee, bleating lamb,
I can lie down and sleep,
Or think on Him who bore thy name,
Graze after thee, and weep.
  For wash'd in life's river,
  My bright mane forever
  Shall shine like the gold,
  As I guard o'er the fold.'

TO THE DIVINE IMAGE

(From the same)

To mercy, pity, peace, and love,
  All pray in their distress,
And to these virtues of delight
  Return their thankfulness.

For mercy, pity, peace, and love,
  Is God our Father dear;
And mercy, pity, peace, and love,
  Is man, His child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart,
  Pity, a human face;
And Love, the human form divine;
  And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,
  That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine;
  Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,
  In heathen, Turk, or Jew;
Where mercy, love, and pity dwell,
  There God is dwelling too.

ON ANOTHER'S SORROW

(From the same)

Can I see another's woe,
And not be in sorrow too?
Can I see another's grief,
And not seek for kind relief?

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrow's share?
Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow fill'd?

Can a mother sit and hear,
An infant groan, an infant fear?
No, no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

And can He, who smiles on all,
Hear the wren, with sorrow small,
Hear the small bird's grief and care,
Hear the woes that infants bear?

And not sit beside the nest,
Pouring Pity in their breast,
And not sit the cradle near,
Weeping tear on infant's tear?

And not sit both night and day,
Wiping all our tears away?
Oh, no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

He doth give His joy to all:
He becomes an infant small
He becomes a man of woe,
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,
And thy Maker is not by:
Think not thou canst weep a tear,
And thy Maker is not near.

Oh! He gives to us His joy,
That our griefs He may destroy.
Till our grief is fled and gone
He doth sit by us and moan.

THE TIGER

(From *The Songs of Experience*, 1794)

Tiger, Tiger, burning bright
In the forest of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Framed thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burned that fire within thine eyes?
On what wings dared he aspire?
What the hand dared seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
When thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand and what dread feet?

What the hammer, what the chain,
Knit thy strength and forged thy brain?
What the anvil? What dread grasp
Dared thy deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee?

AH! SUNFLOWER

(From the same)

Ah! Sunflower! weary of time,
  Who countest the steps of the sun,
Seeking after that sweet golden prime
  Where the traveller's journey is done;
Where the Youth pined away with desire,
  And the pale virgin shrouded in snow,
Arise from their graves, and aspire
  Where my sunflower wishes to go!

Robert Burns

(1759–1796)

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

(1785)

"Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor."—*Gray*

My lov'd, my honour'd, much respected frie
No mercenary bard his homage pays;
With honest pride, I scorn each selfish enc
My dearest meed, a friend's esteem a
praise:
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequester'd scene;
The native feelings strong, the guile
ways,
What Aiken in a cottage would have been;
Ah! tho' his worth unknown, far happier ther
ween!

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;
The short'ning winter-day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh;
The black'ning trains o' craws to their repo
The toil-worn Cotter frae his labour goes
This night his weekly moil is at an end,
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and
hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does han
ward bend.

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;
Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin', stacher through
To meet their dad, wi' flichterin' noise and glee.
His wee bit ingle, blinkin' bonily,
His clean hearth-stane, his thrifty wifie's smile,
The lisping infant, prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary kiaugh and care beguile,
And makes him quite forget his labour and his toil.

Belyve, the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, amang the farmers roun';
Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie rin
A cannie errand to a neebor town:
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman-grown,
In youthfu' bloom,—love sparkling in her e'e—
Comes hame, perhaps to shew a braw new gown,
Or deposit her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

With joy unfeign'd, brothers and sisters meet,
And each for other's weelfare kindly spiers:
The social hours, swift-wing'd, unnotic'd fleet:
Each tells the uncos that he sees or hears;
The parents partial eye their hopeful years;
Anticipation forward points the view;
The mother, wi' her needle and her shears,
Gars auld claes look amaist as weel's the new,
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

Their master's and their mistress's command,
The younkers a' are warned to obey:
And mind their labors wi' an eydent hand,

And ne'er, tho' out o' sight, to jauk or pl
"And O! be sure to fear the Lord alway
And mind your duty, duly, morn and night
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
Implore His counsel and assisting might:
They never sought in vain that sought the L
aright."

But, hark! a rap comes gently to the door
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neibor lad came o'er the moor,
To do some errands, and convoy her hame
The wily mother sees the conscious flame
Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek
With heart-struck anxious care enquires
name,
While Jenny hafflins is afraid to speak;
Weel-pleased the mother hears it's nae w
worthless rake.

Wi' kindly welcome, Jenny brings him ben
A strappin youth, he takes the mother's e
Blythe Jenny sees the visit's no ill-ta'en;
The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and l
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows
joy,
But blate an' laithfu', scarce can weel behave
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' and
grave,
Weel-pleas'd to think her bairn's respected l
the lave.

Oh, happy love! where love like this is fou
Oh, heart-felt raptures! bliss beyond co
pare!
I've pacèd much this weary, mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declar

"If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare—
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale."

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart,
A wretch! a villain! lost to love and truth!
That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
Curse on his perjur'd arts! dissembling smooth!
Are honour, virtue, conscience, all exil'd?
Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
Points to the parents fondling o'er their child?
Then paints the ruin'd maid, and their distraction wild?

But now the supper crowns their simple board,
The halesome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food;
The soupe their only hawkie does afford,
That, 'yont the hallan snugly chows her cood:
The dame brings forth, in complimental mood,
To grace the lad, her weel-hain'd kebbuck, fell;
And aft he's prest, and aft he ca's it guid:
The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell
How 't was a towmond auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire *turns o'er, with* patriarchal grace,
The big ha'-bible, ance his father's pride;

His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales a portion with judicious care;
And "Let us worship God!" he says, with solemn air.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise,
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim;
Perhaps 'Dundee's' wild-warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive 'Martyrs,' worthy of the name;
Or noble 'Elgin' beets the heaven-ward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:
Compar'd with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tickl'd ears no heart-felt raptures raise;
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
How Abram was the friend of God on high;
Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny;
Or how the royal bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire;
Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire;
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
How He, who bore in Heaven the second name,
Had not on earth whereon to lay His head;
How His first followers and servants sped;

The precepts sage they wrote to many a land:
How he, who lone in Patmos banishèd,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounc'd by Heaven's command.

Then kneeling down, to Heaven's Eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing,"
That thus they all shall meet in future days,
There, ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear;
While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Compar'd with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method, and of art;
When men display to congregations wide
Devotion's ev'ry grace, except the heart!
The Power, incens'd, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleas'd, the language of the soul;
And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll.

Then homeward all take off their sev'ral way;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest:
The parent-pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request,
That He who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide;
But *chiefly, in their hearts* with grace divine preside.

From scenes like these, old Scotia's grande
springs,
That makes her lov'd at home, rever'd abroa
Princes and lords are but the breath of kin
"An honest man's the noblest work of Goc
And certes, in fair virtue's heavenly road
The cottage leaves the palace far behind;
What is a lordling's pomp? a cumbrous lo
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refin'd!

O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven
sent,
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health, and peace, and sw
content!
And O! may Heaven their simple lives p
vent
From luxury's contagion, weak and vile!
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around their much-lo
isle.

O Thou! who pour'd the patriotic tide,
That stream'd thro' great unhappy Walla
heart,
Who dar'd to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part:
(The patriot's God, peculiarly Thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!)
Oh never, never Scotia's realm desert;
But still the patriot, and the patriot-bard
In bright succession raise, her ornament a
guard!

TO A MOUSE, ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST, WITH THE PLOUGH, NOVEMBER, 1785

Wee, sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
Wi' murd'ring pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion,
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion,
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen icker in a thrave
'S a sma' request;
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,
And never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
It's silly wa's the win's are strewin!
An' naething now to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,
Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell—
Till, *crash! the cruel* coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turned out, for a' thy trouble
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch cauld!

But Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain;
The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain
For promis'd joy!

Still, thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But, och! I backward cast my e'e,
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY, ON TURNING DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH IN APRIL.

Wee, modest, crimson-tippèd flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stour
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonie gem.

Alas! it's no thy neibor sweet,
The bonie lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,
Wi' spreckl'd breast!
When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent-earth
Thy tender form.

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
High shelt'ring woods and wa's maun shield;
But thou, beneath the random bield
O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histy stibble-field,
Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share upturns thy bed,
And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betray'd,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soil'd is laid,
Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd!
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

Such fate *to suffering* worth is given,
Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,

By human pride or cunning driv'n,
To mis'ry's brink;
Till, wrench'd of ev'ry stay but Heav'n
He, ruin'd, sink!

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fat
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern Ruin's plough-share drives, elat
Full on thy bloom,
Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weigh
Shall be thy doom!

TAM O' SHANTER

(First published 1791)

"Of Brownyis and of Bogillis full is this Buke.
Douglas

When chapman billies leave the street,
And drouthy neibors, neibors meet;
As market days are wearing late,
And folk begin to tak the gate,
While we sit bousing at the nappy,
An' getting fou and unco happy,
We think na on the lang Scots miles,
The mosses, waters, slaps, and stiles,
That lie between us and our hame,
Where sits our sulky, sullen dame,
Gathering her brows like gathering storr
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

This truth fand honest TAM O' SHANT
As he frae Ayr ae night did canter:
(Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasse
For honest men and bonie lasses).

O Tam! had'st thou but been sae wise,
As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice!

She tauld thee weel thou wast a skellum;
A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum;
That frae November till October,
Ae market-day thou wasna sober;
That ilka melder wi' the Miller,
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;
That ev'ry naig was ca'd a shoe on
The Smith and thee gat roarin fou on;
That at the Lord's house, ev'n on Sunday,
Thou drank wi' Kirkton Jean till Monday;
She prophesied that late or soon,
Thou wad be found deep drown'd in Doon,
Or catch'd wi' warlocks in the mirk,
By Alloway's auld haunted kirk.

Ah, gentle dames! it gars me greet,
To think how mony counsels sweet,
How mony lengthen'd sage advices,
The husband frae the wife despises!

But to our tale:—Ae market night,
Tam had got planted unco right,
Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely,
Wi' reaming swats, that drank divinely;
And at his elbow, Souter Johnie,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony:
Tam lo'ed him like a very brither;
They had been fou for weeks thegither.
The night drave on wi' sangs an' clatter;
And aye the ale was growing better:
The Landlady and Tam grew gracious,
Wi' favours secret, sweet, and precious:
The Souter tauld his queerest stories;
The Landlord's laugh was ready chorus:
The storm without might rair and rustle,
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drown'd himsel amang the nappy.
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleasure:
Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious!

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts forever;
Or like the Borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the Rainbow's lovely form,
Evanishing amid the storm.—
Nae man can tether Time or Tide;
The hour approaches Tam maun ride:
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stan
That dreary hour he mounts his beast in;
And sic a night he taks the road in,
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.
The wind blew as 't wad blawn its last;
The rattling showers rose on the blast;
The speedy gleams the darkness swallow'd;
Loud, deep, and lang the thunder bellow'd:
That night, a child might understand,
The deil had business on his hand.
Weel-mounted on his gray mare Meg,
A better never lifted leg,
Tam skelpit on thro' dub and mire,
Despising wind, and rain, and fire;
Whiles holding fast his gude blue bonnet,
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonne
Whiles glow'rin round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles catch him unawares;
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
Where ghaists and houlets nightly cry.

By this time he was cross the ford,
Where in the snaw the chapman smoor'd;
And past the birks and meikle stane,
Where drunken Charlie brak's neck-bane;
And thro' the whins, and by the cairn,
Where hunters fand the murder'd bairn;
And near the thorn, aboon the well,
Where Mungo's mither hang'd hersel'.
Before him Doon pours all his floods;
The doubling storm roars thro' the woods,
The lightnings flash from pole to pole,
Near and more near the thunders roll,
When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze,
Thro' ilka bore the beams were glancing,
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.

Inspiring bold John Barleycorn!
What dangers thou canst make us scorn!
Wi' tippenny, we fear nae evil;
Wi' usquebae, we'll face the devil!
The swats sae ream'd in Tammie's noddle,
Fair play, he car'd na deils a boddle,
But Maggie stood, right sair astonish'd,
Till, by the heel and hand admonish'd,
She ventur'd forward on the light;
And, wow! Tam saw an unco sight!

Warlocks and witches in a dance:
Nae cotillion, brent new frae France,
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
Put life and mettle in their heels.
A winnock-bunker in the east,
There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast;
A towzie tyke, black, grim, and large,
To gie them *music was his* charge;
He screw'd the pipes and gart them skirl,

Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.
Coffins stood round, like open presses,
That shaw'd the Dead in their last dresses;
And (by some devilish cantraip sleight)
Each in its cauld hand held a light.
By which heroic Tam was able
To note upon the haly table,
A murderer's banes, in gibbet-airns;
Twa span-lang, wee, unchristened bairns;
A thief, new-cutted frae a rape,
Wi' his last gasp his gab did gape;
Five tomahawks, wi' blude red-rusted;
Five scimitars, wi' murder crusted;
A garter which a babe had strangled:
A knife, a father's throat had mangled,
Whom his ain son of life bereft,
The gray-hairs yet stack to the heft;
Wi' mair of horrible and awfu',
Which even to name wad be unlawfu'.

As Tammie glowr'd amaz'd, and curious,
The mirth and fun grew fast and furious;
The Piper loud and louder blew,
The dancers quick and quicker flew;
They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit
Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,
And coost her duddies to the wark,
And linket at it in her sark!

Now Tam, O Tam! had thae been queans,
A' plump and strapping in their teens!
Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flainen,
Been snaw-white seventeen-hunder linen!—
Thir breeks o' mine, my only pair,
That ance were plush, o' guid blue hair,
I wad hae gi'en them off my hurdies,
For ae blink o' the bonie burdies!

But wither'd beldams, auld and droll,
Rigwoodie hags wad spean a foal,
Louping an' flinging on a crummock,
I wonder didna turn thy stomach.
But Tam kennt what was what fu' br
There was ae winsome wench and waulie
That night enlisted in the core,
Lang after ken'd on Carrick shore;
(For mony a beast to dead she shot,
And perish'd mony a bonie boat,
And shook baith meikle corn and bear,
And kept the country-side in fear);
Her cutty sark, o' Paisley harn,
That while a lassie she had worn,
In longitude tho' sorely scanty,
It was her best, and she was vauntie.
Ah! little ken'd thy reverend grannie,
That sark she coft for her wee Nannie,
Wi' twa pund Scots ('twas a' her riches),
Wad ever grac'd a dance o' witches!
But here my Muse her wing maun cour,
Sic flights are far beyond her power;
To sing how Nannie lap and flang,
(A souple jade she was and strang),
And how Tam stood, like ane bewitch'd,
And thought his very een enrich'd:
Even Satan glowr'd and fidg'd fu' fain,
And hotch'd and blew wi' might and main:
Till first ae caper, syne anither,
Tam tint his reason a' thegither,
And roars out, "Weel done, Cutty-sark!"
And in an instant all was dark:
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
When out the hellish legion sallied.

As bees *bizz out* wi' angry fyke,
When plundering herds assail their byke;

As open pussie's mortal foes,
When, pop! she starts before their nose;
As eager runs the market-crowd,
When "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud;
So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
Wi' mony an eldritch skreich and hollow.

Ah, Tam! ah, Tam! thou 'll get thy fairi
In hell they 'll roast thee like a herrin!
In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin!
Kate soon will be a woefu' woman!
Now, do thy speedy-utmost, Meg,
And win the key-stane o' the brig;
There, at them thou thy tail may toss,
A running stream they darena cross!
But ere the key-stane she could make,
The fient a tail she had to shake!
For Nannie, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;
But little wist she Maggie's mettle!
Ae spring brought off her master hale,
But left behind her ain gray tail:
The carlin claught her by the rump,
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk man, and mother's son, take heed:
Whene'er to Drink you are inclin'd,
Or Cutty-sarks rin in your mind,
Think ye may buy the joys o'er dear;
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare.

BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS ARMY AT BANNOCKBURN

(1793)

Scots, wha hae wi' WALLACE bled,
Scots, wham BRUCE has often led;
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to Victorie!

Now's the day, and now's the hour;
See the front o' battle lour;
See approach proud EDWARD'S power—
Chains and Slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!

Wha, for Scotland's King and Law,
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
FREEMAN stand, or FREEMAN fa',
Let him on wi' me!

By Oppression's woes and pains!
By your Sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

Lay the proud Usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
LIBERTY'S in every blow!—
Let us Do or Die!

THE BANKS OF DOON

(Second version, 1791)

Ye flowery banks o' bonie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bir
That sings upon the bough!
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause Luve was true.

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie b
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Aft hae I rov'd by bonie Doon,
To see the woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its Luve,
And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Upon its thorny tree;
But my fause Luver staw the rose,
And left the thorn wi' me.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Upon a morn in June;
And sae I flourished on the morn,
And sae was pu'd or noon.

A RED, RED ROSE

(1793)

O my Luve's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June:
O my Luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun:
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare-thee-weel, my only Luve!
And fare-thee-weel awhile!
And I will come again, my Luve,
Tho' 't were ten thousand mile!

IS THERE, FOR HONEST POVERTY

(1795)

(Tune—"For a' that")

Is there for honest Poverty,
That hings his head, an' a' that;
The coward slave—we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
Our toils obscure an' a' that,
The rank is *but the guinea's* stamp,
The Man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hoddin grey, an' a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their w
A Man's a Man for a' that:
For a' that, an' a' that,
Their tinsel show, an' a' that;
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie ca'd a lord,
Wha struts, an' stares an' a' that;
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a' that:
For a' that, an' a' that,
His ribband, star, an' a' that:
The man o' independent mind,
He looks an' laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, an' a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Guid faith, he maunna fa' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
Their dignities an' a' that;
The pith o' sense, an' pride o' worth,
Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
(As come it will for a' that,)
That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth
Shall bear the gree, an' a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
It's coming yet for a' that,
That Man to Man, the warld o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

O, WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST

(1796)

O wert thou in the cauld blast,
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee;
Or did Misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
Thy bield should be my bosom,
To share it a', to share it a'.

Or were I in the wildest waste,
Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
The desert were a Paradise,
If thou wert there, if thou wert there;
Or were I monarch o' the globe,
Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The brightest jewel in my Crown
Wad be my Queen, wad be my Queen.

William Wordsworth

1770–1850

LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR

(July 13, 1798)

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a sweet inland murmur.—Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,

That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some hermit's cave, where by his fire
The hermit sits alone.
These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration:—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
In which the burden of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,

Is lightened:—that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul;
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.
If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft—
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! Thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished
thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when
first
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For Nature
then

(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all.—I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Nor for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I
still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty
world
Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize

In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.
Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
For thou art with me here upon the banks
Of this fair river; thou, my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain-winds be free
To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,

Should be thy portion, with what heal
thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance-
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes tl
gleams
Of past existence—wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love—oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor will thou then forget,
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to m
More dear, both for themselves and for th
sake!

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY

(1798)

"Why, William, on that old gray stone
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away?

Where are your books?—that light bequeathe
To Beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

You look round on your Mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply:

"The eye—it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.

Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things forever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking?

—Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old gray stone,
And dream my time away."

THE TABLES TURNED

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT

(1798)

Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you 'll grow double:
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through *all the long* green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:—
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

THREE YEARS SHE GREW

(1799)

Three years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This Child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own.

Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm,
Grace that shall mold the Maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature *spake*—*The* work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!

She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WA

(1799)

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

MICHAEL

A Pastoral Poem

(1800)

If from the public way you turn your ste
Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head
You will suppose that with an upright
Your feet must struggle; in such bold a
The pastoral mountains front you, face
But, courage! for around that boisterc
The mountains have all opened out the
And made a hidden valley of their o

No habitation can be seen; but they
Who journey thither find themselves alone
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and
kites
That overhead are sailing in the sky.
It is in truth an utter solitude;
Nor should I have made mention of this Dell
But for one object which you might pass by,
Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones:
And to that simple object appertains
A story unenriched with strange events,
Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,
Or for the summer shade. It was the first
Of those domestic tales that spake to me
Of Shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
Whom I already loved:—not verily
For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
Where was their occupation and abode.
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy
Careless of books, yet having felt the power
Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects, led me on to feel
For passions that were not my own, and think
(At random and imperfectly indeed)
On man, the heart of man, and human life.
Therefore, although it be a history
Homely and rude, I will relate the same
For the delight of a few natural hearts;
And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
Of youthful Poets, who among these hills
Will be my second self when I am gone.

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere Vale
There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name;
An old *man, stout of* heart, and strong of limb.
His bodily frame had been from youth to age

Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
And watchful more than ordinary men.
Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone; and, oftentimes,
When others heeded not, he heard the South
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
"The winds are now devising work for me!"
And, truly, at all times, the storm, that drives
The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
Up to the mountains: he had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him, and left him, on the heights.
So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks
Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's
thoughts.
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he has
breathed
The common air; hills, which with vigorous step
He had so often climbed; which had impressed
So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;
Which, like a book, preserved the memory
Of the dumb animals whom he had saved,
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
The certainty of honourable gain,
Those fields, those hills—what could they less
had laid
Strong hold on his affections, were to him
*A pleas*urable feeling of blind love,
*The pleas*ure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.
His Helpmate was a comely matron, old—
Though younger than himself full twenty years.
She was a woman of a stirring life,
Whose heart was in her house: two wheels she had
Of antique form; this large, for spinning wool;
That small, for flax; and if one wheel had rest,
It was because the other was at work.
The Pair had but one inmate in their house,
An only Child, who had been born to them
When Michael, telling o'er his years, began
To deem that he was old,—in shepherd's phrase,
With one foot in the grave. This only Son,
With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a storm,
The one of an inestimable worth,
Made all their household. I may truly say
That they were as a proverb in the vale
For endless industry. When day was gone,
And from their occupations out of doors
The Son and Father were come home, even then,
Their labor did not cease; unless when all
Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and there,
Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk,
Sat round the basket piled with oaten cakes,
And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when the meal
Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was named)
And his old Father both betook themselves
To such convenient work as might employ
Their hands by the fire-side; perhaps to card
Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair
Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,
Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge,
That in our ancient uncouth country style
With huge and black projection overbrowed

Large space beneath, as duly as the light
Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a lamp;
An aged utensil, which had performed
Service beyond all others of its kind.
Early at evening did it burn—and late,
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
Which, going by from year to year, had found,
And left the couple neither gay perhaps
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,
Living a life of eager industry.
And now, when Luke had reached his eighteenth year,
There by the light of this old lamp they sat,
Father and Son, while far into the night
The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,
Making the cottage through the silent hours
Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.
This light was famous in its neighborhood,
And was a public symbol of the life
That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanced
Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
Stood single, with large prospect, north and south
High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,
And westward to the village near the lake;
And from this constant light, so regular
And so far seen, the House itself, by all
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
Both old and young, was named The Evening Star.
Thus living on through such a length of years
The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs
Have loved his Helpmate; but to Michael's heart
This son of his old age was yet more dear—
Less from instinctive tenderness, the same
Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood of all—
Than that a child, more than all other gifts

That earth can offer to declining man,
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,
And stirrings of inquietude, when they
By tendency of nature needs must fail.
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,
His heart and his heart's joy! For oftentimes
Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
Had done him female service, not alone
For pastime and delight, as is the use
Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked
His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand.
And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy
Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love,
Albeit of a stern unbending mind,
To have the Young one in his sight, when he
Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's stool
Sate with a fettered sheep before him stretched
Under the large old oak, that near his door
Stood single, and, from matchless depth of shade
Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the sun,
Thence in our rustic dialect was called
The Clipping Tree, a name which yet it bears.
There while they two were sitting in the shade,
With others round them, earnest all and blithe,
Would Michael exercise his heart with looks
Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep
By catching at their legs, or with his shouts
Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the boy grew up
A healthy *Lad, and* carried in his cheek
Two steady roses that were five years old;

Then Michael from a winter coppice cut
With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped
With iron, making it throughout in all
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,
And gave it to the Boy; wherewith equipt
He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock;
And, to his office prematurely called,
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
Something between a hindrance and a help;
And for this cause not always, I believe,
Receiving from his Father hire of praise;
Though naught was left undone which staff, voice,
Or looks, or threatening gestures, could perfor

But soon, as Luke, full ten years old, cou stand
Against the mountain blasts, and to the height
Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,
He with his Father daily went, and they
Were as companions, why should I relate
That objects which the Shepherd loved befor
Were dearer now? that from the Boy there ca
Feelings and emanations—things which were
Light to the sun and music to the wind:
And that the old Man's heart seemed born a

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew
And now, when he had reached his eigh year,
He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household
From day to day, to Michael's ear there
Distressful tidings. Long before the ti
Of which I speak, the Shepherd had bee

In surety for his brother's son, a man
Of an industrious life, and ample means;
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
Had prest upon him; and old Michael now
Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,
A grievous penalty, but little less
Than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim,
At the first hearing, for a moment took
More hope out of his life than he supposed
That any old man ever could have lost.
As soon as he had armed himself with strength
To look his trouble in the face, it seemed
The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once
A portion of his patrimonial fields.
Such was his first resolve; he thought again,
And his heart failed him. "Isabel," said he,
Two evenings after he had heard the news,
"I have been toiling more than seventy years,
And in the open sunshine of God's love
Have we all lived; yet if these fields of ours
Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think
That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
Our lot is a hard lot; the sun himself
Has scarcely been more diligent than I;
And I have lived to be a fool at last
To my own family. An evil man
That was, and made an evil choice, if he
Were false to us; and if he were not false,
There are ten thousand to whom loss like this
Had been no sorrow. I forgive him;—but
'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.

When I began, my purpose was to speak
Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.
Our *Luke shall leave* us, Isabel; the land
Shall not go from us, and it shall be free;

He shall possess it free as is the wind
That passes over it. We have, thou know'
Another kinsman—he will be our friend
In this distress. He is a prosperous man,
Thriving in trade—and Luke to him shall
And with his kinsman's help and his own t
He quickly will repair this loss, and then
He may return to us. If here he stay,
What can be done? Where everyone is p
What can be gained?"
At this the old Man p
And Isabel sat silent, for her mind
Was busy, looking back into past times.
There's Richard Bateman, thought she to h
He was a parish-boy—at the church-door
They made a gathering for him, shillings,
And half pennies, wherewith the nei
bought
A basket, which they filled with peddler's
And, with this basket on his arm, the lad
Went up to London, found a master there,
Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy
To go and overlook his merchandise
Beyond the seas; where he grew wondrous
And left estates and moneys to the poor,
And, at his birth-place, built a chapel, floo
With marble, which he sent from foreign
These thoughts, and many others of like so
Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel
And her face brightened. The old Man wa
And thus resumed:—"Well, Isabel! this sc
These two days, has been meat and drink to
Far more than we have lost is left us yet.
—We have enough—I wish indeed that I
Were younger;—but this hope is a good ho
—*Make* ready Luke's best garments, of the
Buy for him more, and let us send him for

To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:
If he *could* go, the boy should go to-night."
Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth
With a light heart. The Housewife for five days
Was restless morn and night, and all day long
Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare
Things needful for the journey of her son.
But Isabel was glad when Sunday came
To stop her in her work: for, when she lay
By Michael's side, she through the last two nights
Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep:
And when they rose at morning she could see
That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon
She said to Luke, while they two by themselves
Were sitting at the door, "Thou must not go:
We have no other Child but thee to lose,
None to remember—do not go away;
For if thou leave thy Father, he will die."
The youth made answer with a jocund voice;
And Isabel, when she had told her fears,
Recovered heart. That evening her best fare
Did she bring forth, and all together sat
Like happy people round a Christmas fire.
With daylight Isabel resumed her work
And all the ensuing week the house appeared
As cheerful as a grove in Spring: at length
The expected letter from their kinsman came,
With kind assurances that he would do
His utmost for the welfare of the Boy;
To which, requests were added, that forthwith
He might be sent to him. Ten times or more
The letter was read over; Isabel
Went forth to show it to the neighbors round;
Nor was there at that time on English land
A prouder heart *than* Luke's. When Isabel
Had to her house returned, the old Man said,

"He shall depart to-morrow." To this w
The Housewife answered, talking much of t
Which, if at such short notice he should go
Would surely be forgotten. But at length
She gave consent, and Michael was at ease
Near the tumultuous brook of Green-
Ghyll,
In that deep valley, Michael had designed
To build a Sheep-fold; and, before he hea
The tidings of his melancholy loss,
For this same purpose he had gathered up
A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's
Lay thrown together, ready for the work.
With Luke that evening thitherward he wa
And soon as they had reached the plac
stopped,
And thus the old Man spake to him: "My
To-morrow thou wilt leave me: with full
I look upon thee, for thou art the same
That wert a promise to me ere thy birth
And all thy life hast been my daily joy.
I will relate to thee some little part
Of our two histories; 'twill do thee goo
When thou art from me, even if I shoul
On things thou canst not know of.—Aft
First camest into the world—as oft befa
To new-born infants—thou didst sleep
Two days, and blessings from thy Father'
Then fell upon thee. Day by day pass
And still I loved thee with increasing l
Never to living ear came sweeter sound
Than when I heard thee by our own fir
First uttering, without words, a natura
While thou, a feeding babe, didst in th
Sing at thy mother's breast. Mont
month,
And in the open fields my life was

And on the mountains; else I think that thou
Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's knees.
But we were playmates, Luke: among these hills,
As well thou knowest, in us the old and young
Have played together, nor with me didst thou
Lack any pleasure which a boy can know."
Luke had a manly heart; but at these words
He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped his hand,
And said, "Nay, do not take it so—I see
That these are things of which I need not speak.
Even to the utmost I have been to thee
A kind and a good Father: And herein
I but repay a gift which I myself
Received at others' hands; for, though now old
Beyond the common life of man, I still
Remember them who loved me in my youth.
Both of them sleep together: here they lived,
As all their Forefathers had done; and when
At length their time was come, they were not loth
To give their bodies to the family mould.
I wished that thou shouldst live the life they lived:
But, 'tis a long time to look back, my Son,
And see so little gain from threescore years.
These fields were burdened when they came to me;
Till I was forty years of age, not more
Than half of my inheritance was mine.
I toiled and toiled; God blessed me in my work,
And till these three weeks past the land was free.
It looks as if it never could endure
Another Master. Heaven forgive me, Luke,
If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good
That thou should'st go."
At this the old man paused.
Then, pointing to the stones near which they *stood*

Thus, after a short silence, he resumed:
" This was a work for us; and now, my Soı
It is a work for me. But, lay one stone—
Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own h
Nay, Boy, be of good hope;—we both may
To see a better day. At eighty-four
I am strong and hale;—Do thou thy part
I will do mine.—I will begin again
With many tasks that were resigned to the
Up to the heights, and in among the storn
Will I without thee go again, and do
All works which I was wont to do alone,
Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless thee
Thy heart these two weeks has been beatir
With many hopes; it should be so—yes—
I knew that thou couldst never have a wis
To leave me, Luke: thou hast been bound
Only by links of love: When thou art go
What will be left to us!—But, I forget
My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,
As I requested; and hereafter, Luke,
When thou art gone away, should evil n
Be thy companions, think of me, my S
And of this moment: hither turn thy th
And God will strengthen thee: amid all
And all temptation, Luke, I pray tha
Mayst bear in mind the life thy Fathe
Who, being innocent, did for that ca
Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare
When thou return'st, thou in this pla
A work which is not here—a covenan
'Twill be between us; but, whatever f
Befall thee, I shall love thee to the
And bear thy memory with me to th

The Shepherd ended here; and
down,

And, as his Father had requested, laid
The first stone of the Sheep-fold. At the sight
The old Man's grief broke from him; to his heart
He pressed his Son, he kissèd him and wept;
And to the house together they returned.
Hushed was that House in peace, or seeming peace,
Ere the night fell:—with morrow's dawn the Boy
Began his journey, and when he had reached
The public way, he put on a bold face;
And all the neighbors, as he passed their doors,
Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,
That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their Kinsman come,
Of Luke and his well-doing: and the Boy
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,
Which, as the Housewise phrased it, were throughout
"The prettiest letters that were ever seen."
Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.
So, many months passed on; and once again
The Shepherd went about his daily work
With confident and cheerful thoughts; and now
Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour
He to that valley took his way, and there
Wrought at the Sheep-fold. Meantime Luke began
To slacken in his duty; and, at length,
He in the dissolute city gave himself
To evil courses: ignominy and shame
Fell on him, so that he was driven at last
To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love;
'Twill make a thing endurable, which else
Would overset the brain, or break the heart:
I have *conversed with* more than one who well
Remember the old Man, and what he was

Years after he had heard this heavy news.
His bodily frame had been from youth to ag
Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks
He went, and still looked up to sun and clou
And listened to the wind; and, as before,
Performed all kinds of labor for his sheep,
And for the land, his small inheritance.
And to that hollow dell from time to time
Did he repair, to build the Fold of which
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet
The pity which was then in every heart
For the old Man—and 'tis believed by all
That many and many a day he thither went,
And never lifted up a single stone.
There, by the Sheep-fold, sometimes wa
seen,
Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
The length of full seven years, from time to t
He at the building of this Sheep-fold wroug
And left the work unfinished when he died.
Three years, or little more, did Isabel
Survive her husband: at her death the estate
Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.
The Cottage which was named The Evening
Is gone—the plowshare has been through
ground
On which it stood; great changes have
wrought
In all the neighborhood:—yet the oak is lef
That grew beside their door; and the remair
Of the unfinished Sheep-fold may be seen
Beside the boisterous brook of Green-head G

MY HEART LEAPS UP

(1807)

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

THE SOLITARY REAPER

(1807)

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O, listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, *unhappy, far-off* things,
And battles long ago:

Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

ODE

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

(1803–6)

I.

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II.

The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose,
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;

The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

III.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong:
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday;—
Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy Shepherd-boy!

IV.

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
O evil day! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning,
This sweet May-morning,
And the *Children* are culling
On every side,

In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines w
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
—But there's a Tree, of many, one,
A single Field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is go
The Pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

V.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But He beholds the light, and whence it flow
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the eas
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

VI.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kin

And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size!
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art;
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little Actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

VIII.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy Soul's immensity;
Thou best *Philosopher*, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,

That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal d
Haunted forever by the eternal mind,—
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the migh
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's hei
Why with such earnest pains dost thou pro
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strif
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly fi
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

IX.

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth l
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering i
breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,

High instincts before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

X.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now forever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of *splendour in the grass*, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find

Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spri
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through deat
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hill
Groves,
Forebode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your mig
I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the Brooks which down their chann
Even more than when I tripped lightly a
The innocent brightness of a new-born I
Is lovely yet;
The Clouds that gather round the setting
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortali
Another race hath been, and other palms a
Thanks to the human heart by which we l
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fe
To me the meanest flower that blows can
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for t

"I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD

(1807)

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude:
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

"SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT"

(1807)

She was a Phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely Apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes are stars of Twilight fair;
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!
Her *household motions* light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty;

A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A Creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eyes serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light.

ODE TO DUTY

(1807)

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou, who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free;
And calm'st the weary strife of frail hu

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad Hearts! without reproach or blot
Who do thy work, and know it not.
Long may the kindly impulse last!
But thou, if they should totter, tea
stand fast!

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And they a blissful course may hold
Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried;
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust:
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control;
But in the quietness of thought:
Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance-desires:
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face:
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
And the *most ancient* heavens, through Thee, are *fresh and strong.*

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
Oh, let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of truth thy Bondman le
live!

SONNETS

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 180

O Friend! I know not which way I must l
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,
To think that now our life is only drest
For show; mean handy-work of craftsman, c
Or groom!—We must run glittering like a l
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:
The wealthiest man among us is the best:
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry: and these we adore:
Plain living and high thinking are no more:
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household law

LONDON, 1802

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hou
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, pow

Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

"WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN MEMORY"

(1802)

When I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
I had, my Country!—am I to be blamed?
Now, when I think of Thee, and what Thou art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
For dearly must we prize thee; we who find
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
And I by my affection was beguiled:
What wonder if a Poet now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE,

SEPTEMBER 3, 1802

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In *his first splendour* valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!

The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

COMPOSED UPON THE BEACH, NEAR CALAIS
AUGUST, 1802

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free;
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea.
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest with me here
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine.
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

"THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US"
(1806)

The world is too much with us: late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

1772–1834

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

IN SEVEN PARTS

(From the *Lyrical Ballads*, 1798)

Argument

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.

PART I.

An ancient Mariner meeteth three Gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one.

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
'By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,
'There was a ship,' quoth he.
'Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!'
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The Wedding-Guest is spellbound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and *constrained to hear his tale.*

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyes Mariner.

'The ship was cheered, the harbo cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the line.

The sun came up upon the left
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—'
The Wedding-Guest here beat his brea
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The Wedding-Guest heareth the bridal music; but the Mariner continueth his tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The ship driven by a storm toward the south pole.

'And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow

Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

of ice, arful here thing seen.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound!

at sea- ed the came he and ed joy tality.

At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!

he Al- oveth nod l fol- ship ned

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

and

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-s
white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine.'

The ancient Mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.

'God save thee, ancient Mariner!
From the fiends, that plague
thus!—
Why look'st thou so?'—With my
bow
I shot the Albatross.

PART II.

The Sun now rose upon the right;
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew be
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo!

His shipmates cry out against the ancient Mariner, for killing the bird of good luck.

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred, I had killed the bir
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to sla
That made the breeze to blow!

But when the fog cleared off, they justify the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.

Nor dim nor red, like God's own hea
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averred, I had killed the bi
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to
That bring the fog and mist.

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The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

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enly

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, everywhere,
Alba-
gins to
ed.
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

A spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

And some in dreams assured were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through ut drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

The shipmates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

PART III.

There passed a weary time. Each thro
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

The ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship; and at a ter ransom he

With throats unslaked, with black li baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;

eth his
ech from the
nds of thirst.

Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail! a sail!

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

ash of joy.

l horror fol-
s; for can it
a ship that
ies onward
hout wind or
?

See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

The western wave was all a-flame.
The day was well-nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

eemeth him
the skele-
of a ship.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are *those her sails* that glance in the sun,
Like restless gossameres?

And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting Sun. The Spectre-Woman and her death-mate, and no other on board the skeleton ship. Like vessel, like crew!

Are those her ribs through which the sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that woman's mate?

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

Death and Life-in-Death have diced for the ship's crew, and she (the latter) winneth the ancient Mariner.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
'The game is done! I've won! I've won!
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

No twilight within the courts of the Sun.

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out;
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

At the rising of the Moon,

We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white;
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

one after another;

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,

Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

ıipmates down

Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

ife-in- begins ork on the it Ma-

The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!

PART IV.

Wedding- feareth spirit is g to him;

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown.'—

he ancient ier as- h him of odily life, proceedeth ate his ble pen-

Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

despiseth creatures of calm,

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

and envieth that they should live, and so many lie dead.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea a
the sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked
me
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that cur
And yet I could not die.

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enan-
id, as

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;

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But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

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Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

auty
r happi-

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,

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And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

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The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

PART V.

Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from heaven,
That slid into my soul.

By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew
And when I awoke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth sounds and seeth strange sights and commotions in the sky and the element.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.
And the coming wind did roar more loud
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black
cloud;
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side:
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

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The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The body and I pulled at one rope
But he said nought to me.

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'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!'
Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

For when it dawned—they dropped their arms,
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome Spirit from the south-pole carries on the ship as far as the line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:

But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard and in my soul discerned,
Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?
By Him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

'The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'

PART VI.

FIRST VOICE

'But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing?'

SECOND VOICE

'Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

The Mariner hath been cast into a trance; for the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life could endure.

FIRST VOICE

'But why drives on that ship so fast
Without or wave or wind?'

SECOND VOICE

'The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.

The supernatural motion is retarded; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high,
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is finally expiated.

And now this spell was snapt: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

The ancient Mariner beholdeth his native country.

Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The lighthouse top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no le
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with si
light
Till rising from the same,
The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies, Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

and appear in their own forms of light. A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turned my eyes upon the deck—
Oh Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his han
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his han
No voice did they impart—

No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.
The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART VII.

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This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
'Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and
fair,
That signal made but now?'

Approacheth the ship with wonder.

'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said—
'And they answered not our cheer!
The planks look warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

'Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-feared'—'Push on, push on!'
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

The ship suddenly sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient Mariner is saved in the Pilot's boat.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

ıncient ner earn- entreateth lermit to ve him; he penance e falls on

'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!'
The Hermit crossed his brow.
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

ever and ı through- ıis future ın agony traineth to travel ı land *to*

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till *my ghastly* tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to lar
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from tha
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the brid
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath l
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father ben
Old men, and babes, and loving fr
And youths and maidens gay!

and to teach, by his own example, love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

THE GOOD GREAT MAN

(1802)

COMPLAINT

'How seldom, friend! a good great man inherits
Honour or wealth with all his worth and pains!
It sounds like stories from the land of spirits
If any man obtain that which he merits
Or any merit that which he obtains.'

REPLY

For shame, dear friend, renounce this canting strain!
What would'st thou have a good great man obtain?
Place? titles? salary? a gilded chain?
Or throne of corses which his sword had slain?
Greatness and goodness are not *means*, but *ends!*
Hath he not always treasures, always friends,
The good great man? *three* treasures, LOVE and LIGHT,
And CALM THOUGHTS, regular as infants' breath:
And three firm friends, more sure than day and *night*—
HIMSELF, his MAKER, and the ANGEL DEATH!

YOUTH AND AGE
(1822–1832)

Verse, a breeze mid blossoms straying,
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
Both were mine! Life went a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young!
When I was young?—Ah, woful When!
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,
How lightly *then* it flashed along:—
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide!
Nought cared this body for wind or weather
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
O! the joys, that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old.

Ere I was old? Oh woful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!
O Youth! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be that Thou art gone!
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd:—
And thou wert aye a masker bold!
What strange disguise hast now put on,
To make believe, that Thou art gone?

I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this altered size:
But Spring-tide blossoms on thy lips
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve,
When we are old:
That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave,
Like some poor nigh-related guest,
That may not rudely be dismist;
Yet hath outstay'd his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

WORK WITHOUT HOPE

(February 21st, 1827)

All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—
The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—
And Winter slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
And I the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.
Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,
Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar flow.
Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye may,
For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams, away!
*With lips unbright*ened, wreathless brow, I stroll:

And would you learn the spells that d
soul?
Work without Hope draws nectar in a s
And Hope without an object cannot liv

Robert Southey

1774–1843

THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM

(Written at Westbury, 1798)

I.

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun,
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

II.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round,
Which he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found;
He came to ask what he had found,
That was so large, and smooth, and rou

III.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh,
"*'Tis some* poor fellow's skull," said he,
"*Who fell* in the great victory.

IV.

"I find them in the garden,
For there's many hereabout;
And often when I go to plough,
The ploughshare turns them out!
For many thousand men," said he,
"Were slain in that great victory."

V.

"Now tell us what 't was all about,"
Young Peterkin, he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes;
"Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for."

VI.

"It was the English," Kaspar cried,
"Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for,
I could not well make out;
But every body said," quoth he,
"That 'twas a famous victory.

VII.

"My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by;
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly;
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

VIII.

"With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide,
And many a childing mother then

And new-born baby died;
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

IX.

"They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun;
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

X.

"Great praise the Duke of Marlboro' won,
And our good Prince Eugene."
"Why 'twas a very wicked thing!"
Said little Wilhelmine.
"Nay . . nay . . my little girl," quoth h
"It was a famous victory.

XI.

"And every body praised the Duke
Who this great fight did win."
"But what good came of it at last?"
Quoth little Peterkin.
"Why that I cannot tell," said he,
"But 'twas a famous victory."

MY DAYS AMONG THE DEAD ARE PAST

(Written at Keswick, 1818)

I.

My days among the Dead are past;
Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,

The mighty minds of old;
My never-failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.

II.

With them I take delight in weal,
And seek relief in woe;
And while I understand and feel
How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedew'd
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

III.

My thoughts are with the Dead; with them
I live in long-past years;
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
Partake their hopes and fears,
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with an humble mind.

IV.

My hopes are with the Dead; anon
My place with them will be,
And I with them shall travel on
Through all Futurity:
Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
That will not perish in the dust.

Joseph Blanco White

1775–1841

SONNET TO NIGHT

(First published 1828)

Mysterious Night! when our first parent kne
Thee by report Divine, and heard thy name
Did he not tremble for this goodly frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
But through a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the hues of the great setting flam
Hesperus with the Host of Heaven came,
And lo! creation broadened to man's view.
Who could have guessed such darkness lay
cealed
Within thy beams, O Sun! or who divined
Whilst bud, and flower, and insect stood reve
Thou to such countless worlds hadst mad
blind?
Why should we, then, shun death with an
strife,
If Light conceals so much, wherefore not Li

Sir Walter Scott

1771–1832

HAROLD'S SONG TO ROSABELLE

(From *Lay of the Last Minstrel*)

CANTO VI.–XXIII.

(1805)

O listen, listen, ladies gay!
No haughty feat of arms I tell;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay,
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

"Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew!
And, gentle ladye, deign to stay!
Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

"The blackening wave is edged with white;
To inch and rock the sea-mews fly;
The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,
Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh.

"Last night the gifted Seer did view
A wet shrowd swathed round ladye gay;
Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch:
Why cross the gloomy firth to-day?"—

"'Tis not because Lord Lindesay's heir
To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
But that my ladye-mother there
Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

"'Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
But that my sire the wine will chide,
If 'tis not fill'd by Rosabelle.—"

O'er Roslin all that dreary night,
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen;
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden.

Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie,
Each *Baron, for a* sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seem'd all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high St. Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
Lie buried within that proud chapelle;
Each one the holy vault doth hold—
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle!

And each St. Clair was buried there,
With candle, with book, and with knell;
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sun
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

BALLAD

ALICE BRAND

(From *The Lady of the Lake*, 1810)

CANTO IV.

XII.

Merry it is in the good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are cry,
And the hunter's horn is ringing.

"O Alice Brand, my native land
Is lost for love of you;
And we must hold by wood and wold,
As outlaws wont to do.

"O Alice, 'twas all for thy locks so bright,
And 'twas all for thine eyes so blue,
That on the night of our luckless flight,
Thy brother bold I slew.

"Now must I teach to hew the beech
The hand that held the glave,
For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
And stakes to fence our cave.

"And for vest of pall, thy fingers small,
That wont on harp to stray,
A cloak must shear from the slaughter'd deer,
To keep the cold away."——

"O Richard! if my brother died,
'Twas but a fatal chance;
For darkling was the battle tried,
And fortune sped the lance.

"If pall and vair no more I wear,
Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we'll say, is the russet grey,
As gay the forest green.

"And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
And lost thy native land,
Still Alice has her own Richard,
And he his Alice Brand."

XIII.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood,
So blithe Lady Alice is singing;
On the beech's *pride*, and oak's brown side,
Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
Who won'd within the hill,—
Like wind in the porch of a ruin'd chu
His voice was ghostly shrill.

"Why sounds yon stroke on beech and
Our moonlight circle's screen?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?
Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairies' fatal green?

"Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
For thou wert christen'd man;
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For mutter'd word or ban.

"Lay on him the curse of the wither'd l
The curse of the sleepless eye;
Till he wish and pray that his life wo
Nor yet find leave to die."

XIV.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwoo
Though the birds have still'd their si
The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
Before Lord Richard stands,
And, as he cross'd and bless'd himself,
"I fear not sign," quoth the grisly elf,
"That is made with bloody hands."

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
That woman void of fear,—
"And if there's blood upon his hand,
'Tis but the blood of deer."—

"Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
It cleaves unto his hand,
The stain of thine own kindly blood,
The blood of Ethert Brand."

Then forward stepp'd she, Alice Brand,
And made the holy sign,—
"And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
A spotless hand is mine.

"And I conjure thee, Demon elf,
By Him whom Demons fear,
To show us whence thou art thyself,
And what thine errand here?"—

XV.

"'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in Fairy-land,
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing:

"And gaily shines the Fairy-land—
But all is glistening show,
Like the idle gleam that December's beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

"And fading, like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

"It was between the night and day,
When the Fairy King has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And, 'twixt *life and death*, was snatch'd away,
To the joyless Elfin bower.

"But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mold,
As fair a form as thine."

She cross'd him once—she cross'd him twice—
That lady was so brave;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She cross'd him thrice, that lady bold;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mold,
Her brother, Ethert Brand!

Merry it is in good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
But merrier were they in Dunfermeline gray
When all the bells were ringing.

EDMUND'S SONG

(From *Rokeby*, 1812)

CANTO III. XVI.

O, Brignall banks are wild and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there,
Would grace a summer queen.
And as I rode by Dalton-hall,
Beneath the turrets high,
A Maiden on the castle wall
Was singing merrily,—

CHORUS

"O, Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
Than reign our English queen."—

"If, maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we,
That dwell by dale and down?
And if thou canst that riddle read,
As read full well you may,
Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed,
As blithe as Queen of May."—

CHORUS

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
Than reign our English queen.

"I read you, by your bugle-horn,
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a Ranger sworn,
To keep the king's greenwood.—
"A Ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And 'tis at peep of light;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night."—

CHORUS

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay;
I would I were with Edmund there,
To reign his Queen of May!

"With burnish'd brand and musketoon,
So gallantly you come,
I read you *for a bold dragoon,*
That lists the tuck of drum."—

"I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear;
But when the beetle sounds his hum,
My comrades take the spear.

CHORUS

"And, O! though Brignall banks be fair,
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare,
Would reign my Queen of May!

"Maiden! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die;
The fiend, whose lantern lights the mead,
Were better mate than I!
And when I'm with my comrades met,
Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.

CHORUS

"Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen."—

SONG

A WEARY LOT IS THINE

(From the same)

CANTO III. XXVIII.

"A weary lot is thine, fair maid,
A weary lot is thine!
To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
And press the rue for wine!

A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
A feather of the blue,
A doublet of the Lincoln green,—
No more of me you knew
My love!
No more of me you knew.

"This morn is merry June, I trow,
The rose is budding fain;
But she shall bloom in winter snow,
Ere we two meet again."
He turn'd his charger as he spake,
Upon the river shore,
He gave his bridle-reins a shake,
Said, "Adieu forever more,
My love!
And adieu forever more."—

SONG

ALLAN-A-DALE

(From the same)

CANTO III. XXX.

Allan-a-Dale has no faggots for burning,
Allan-a-Dale has no furrow for turning,
Allan-a-Dale has no fleece for the spinning,
Yet Allan-a-Dale has red gold for the winning.
Come, read me my riddle! come, harken my tale!
And tell me the craft of bold Allan-a-Dale.

The Baron of Ravensworth prances in pride,
And he views his domains upon Arkindale side.
The mere for his net, and the land for his game,
The chase for the wild, and the park for the tame;
Yet the fish of the lake, and the deer of the vale,
Are less free to Lord Dacre than Allan-a-Dale!

Allan-a-Dale was ne'er belted a knight,
Though his spur be as sharp, and his blade be as
bright;
Allan-a-Dale is no baron or lord,
Yet twenty tall yeoman will draw at his word;
And the best of our nobles his bonnet will vail,
Who at Rere-cross on Stanmore meets Allan-a-
Dale.

Allan-a-Dale to his wooing is come;
The mother, she ask'd of his household and home
"Though the castle of Richmond stand fair on
the hill,
My hall," quoth bold Allan, "shows gallante
still;
'Tis the blue vault of heaven, with its crescen
so pale,
And with all its bright spangles!" said Allan-
Dale.

The father was steel, and the mother was stone
They lifted the latch, and they bade him begon
But loud, on the morrow, their wail and th
cry:
He has laugh'd on the lass with his bonny bl
eye,
And she fled to the forest to hear a love-tale,
And the youth it was told by was Allan-a-D

SONG

THE CAVALIER

(From the same)

CANTO V. XX

While the dawn on the mountain was misty—
gray,
[illegible] has mounted his steed and

Over hill, over valley, o'er dale, and o'er down;
Heaven shield the brave Gallant that fights for the Crown!

He has doff'd the silk doublet the breast-plate to bear,
He has placed the steel-cap o'er his long flowing hair,
From his belt to his stirrup his broadsword hangs down,—
Heaven shield the brave Gallant that fights for the Crown!

For the rights of fair England that broadsword he draws;
Her King is his leader, her Church is his cause;
His watchword is honour, his pay is renown,—
God strike with the Gallant that strikes for the Crown!

They may boast of their Fairfax, their Waller, and all
The round-headed rebels of Westminster Hall;
But tell those bold traitors of London's proud town,
That the spears of the North have encircled the Crown.

There's Derby and Cavendish, dread of their foes;
There's Erin's high Ormond, and Scotland's Montrose!
Would you match the base Skippon, and Massey, and Brown,
With the *Barons* of England, that fight for the *Crown?*

Now joy to the crest of the brave Cavalier!
Be his banner unconquer'd, resistless his spear,
Till in peace and in triumph his toils he may drown,
In a pledge to fair England, her Church, and her Crown.

HUNTING SONG

(1808)

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
On the mountain dawns the day;
All the jolly chase is here
With hawk, and horse, and hunting-spear;
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain gray,
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming;
And foresters have busy been
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the green-wood haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot, and tall of size;
We can show the marks he made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers frayed;
You shall see him brought to bay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay!
Tell them youth, and mirth, and glee,
Run a course as well as we;
Time, stern huntsman! who can baulk,
Stanch as hound, and fleet as hawk;
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

JOCK OF HAZELDEAN

(1816)

I.

"Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?
Why weep ye by the tide?
I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride:
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
Sae comely to be seen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

II.

"Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale;
Young Frank is chief of Errington
And lord of Langley-dale;
His step is first in peaceful ha',
His sword in battle keen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

III.

"A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair;
Nor *mettled hound*, nor managed hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair;

And you, the foremost of them a',
Shall ride our forest-queen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

IV.

The kirk was deck'd at morning-tide,
The tapers glimmered fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride
And dame and knight are there:
They sought her baith by bower and ha';
The ladie was not seen!
She's o'er the border and awa'
Wi' Jock of Hazeldean.

MADGE WILDFIRE'S SONG

(From *The Heart of Midlothian*, 1818)

"Proud Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

"'Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?'
'When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye.'

. . . . .

"'Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?'—
'The grey-headed sexton,
That delves the grave duly.

. . . . .

The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady;
The owl from the steeple sing,
'Welcome, proud lady.'"

BORDER BALLAD

(From *The Monastery*, 1820)

I.

March, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale,
Why the deil dinna ye march forward in order?
March, march, Eskdale and Liddesdale,
All the Blue Bonnets are bound for the Border.
Many a banner spread,
Flutters above your head,
Many a crest that is famous in story;
Mount and make ready then,
Sons of the mountain glen,
Fight for the Queen and the old Scottish glory!

II.

Come from the hills where the hirsels are grazing,
Come from the glen of the buck and the roe;
Come to the crag where the beacon is blazing,
Come with the buckler, the lance, and the bow.
Trumpets are sounding,
War-steeds are bounding,
Stand to your arms then, and march in good order;
England shall many a day
Tell of the bloody fray,
When the Blue Bonnets came over the Border!

COUNTY GUY

(From *Quentin Durward*, 1823)

"Ah! County Guy, the hour is nigh,
The sun has left the lea,
The orange-flower perfumes the bower,
The breeze is on the sea.
The lark, his lay who thrill'd all day,
Sits hush'd his partner nigh;
Breeze, bird, and flower, confess the hour,
But where is County Guy?

"The village maid steals through the shade
Her shepherd's suit to hear;
To beauty shy, by lattice high,
Sings high-born Cavalier.
The star of Love, all stars above,
Now reigns o'er earth and sky;
And high and low the influence know—
But where is County Guy?"

Thomas Campbell

1777–1844

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND

(1800)

Ye mariners of England
That guard our native seas,
Whose flag has braved a thousand y
The battle and the breeze!
Your glorious standard launch aga
To match another foe,
And sweep through the deep,

While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave!—
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And Ocean was their grave:
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

Britannia needs no bulwark,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak
She quells the floods below—
As they roar on the shore,
Where the stormy winds do blow;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn,
Till danger's troubled night depart
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean warriors!
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow;
When the fiery *fight* is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

HOHENLINDEN

(1802)

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay th' untrodden snow,
And dark as winter was the flow
  Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
  The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed,
Each horseman drew his battle blade,
And furious every charger neighed,
  To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven,
Then rushed the steed to battle driven,
And louder than the bolts of heaven,
  Far flashed the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow,
On Linden's hills of stainèd snow,
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
  Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn, but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dur
Where furious Frank, and fiery Hun,
  Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave,
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich! all thy banners wav
  And charge with all thy chivalry

Few, few, shall part where many meet!
The snow shall be their winding sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

BATTLE OF THE BALTIC

(1809)

Of Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone;
By each gun the lighted brand
In a bold determin'd hand,
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat
Lay their bulwarks on the brine,
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line:
It was ten of April morn by the chime;
As they drifted on their path,
There was silence deep as death,
And the boldest held his breath
For a time.

But the might of England flushed
To anticipate the scene,
And her van the fleeter rushed
O'er the deadly space between—
"Hearts of oak," our captains cried, when each gun
From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like *the hurricane* eclipse
Of the sun.

Again! again! again!
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom:—
Then ceased—and all is wail,
As they strike the shattered sail,
Or in conflagration pale
Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then,
As he hailed them o'er the wave;
"Ye are brothers! ye are men!
And we conquer but to save;
So peace instead of death let us bring:
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet
With the crews, at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our King."

Then Denmark blest our chief,
That he gave her wounds repose;
And the sounds of joy and grief,
From her people wildly rose,
As death withdrew his shades from the da
While the sun looked smiling bright
O'er a wide and woeful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away.

Now joy, old England, raise
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
While the wine cup shines in light;
And yet amidst that joy and uproar,

Let us think of them that sleep,
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore!

Brave hearts! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true,
On the deck of fame that died,
With the gallant good Riou,
Soft sigh the winds of heaven o'er their grave!
While the billow mournful rolls,
And the mermaid's song condoles,
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave!

SONG

"MEN OF ENGLAND"

Men of England! who inherit
Rights that cost your sires their blood,
Men whose undegenerate spirit
Has been proved on land and flood:

By the foes ye've fought uncounted,
By the glorious deeds ye've done,
Trophies captured—breaches mounted,
Navies conquered—kingdoms won!

Yet, remember, England gathers
Hence but fruitless wreaths of fame,
If the patriotism of your fathers
Glow not in your hearts the same.

What are monuments of bravery,
Where no public virtues bloom?
What avail in lands of slavery,
Trophied temples, arch and tomb?

Pageants!—Let the world revere us
For our people's rights and laws,
And the breasts of civic heroes
Bared in Freedom's holy cause.

Yours are Hampden's, Russell's glory,
Sydney's matchless fame is yours,—
Martyrs in heroic story,
Worth a hundred Agincourts!

We're the sons of sires that baffled
Crowned and mitred tyranny:
They defied the field and scaffold
For their birthrights—so will we!

SONG

TO THE EVENING STAR

Star that bringest home the bee,
And sett'st the weary labourer free!
If any star shed peace, 'tis thou,
That send'st it from above,
Appearing when Heaven's breath and brow
Are sweet as her's we love.

Come to the luxuriant skies,
Whilst the landscape's odours rise,
Whilst far-off lowing herds are heard,
And songs, when toil is done,
From cottages whose smoke unstirred
Curls yellow in the sun.

Star of love's soft interviews,
Parted lovers on thee muse;
Their remembrancer in Heaven
Of thrilling vows thou art,
Too delicious to be riven
By absence from the heart.

Thomas Moore

1779-1852

AS SLOW OUR SHIP

(From *Irish Melodies*, 1807-1834)

As slow our ship her foamy track
Against the wind was cleaving,
Her trembling pennant still look'd back
To that dear isle 'twas leaving.
So loath we part from all we love,
From all the links that bind us;
So turn our hearts, where'er we rove,
To those we've left behind us!

When, round the bowl, of vanish'd years
We talk, with joyous seeming,
And smiles that might as well be tears,
So faint, so sad their beaming;
While mem'ry brings us back again
Each early tie that twin'd us,
Oh, sweet's the cup that circles then
To those we've left behind us!

And, when in other climes we meet
Some isle or vale enchanting,
Where all looks flow'ry, mild and sweet,
And nought but love is wanting;
We think how great had been our bliss,
If Heav'n had but assign'd us
To live and die in scenes like this,
With some we've left behind us!

As trav'llers oft look back at eve,
When eastward darkly going,
To gaze upon *the light* they leave
Still faint behind them glowing—

So, when the close of pleasure's day
To gloom hath near consign'd us,
We turn to catch one fading ray
Of joy that's left behind us.

THE HARP THAT ONCE THROUGH TARA'S H

(From the same)

The harp that once, through Tara's Halls
The soul of music shed,
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls,
As if that soul were fled:—
So sleeps the pride of former days,
So glory's thrill is o'er;
And hearts, that once beat high for prais
Now feel that pulse no more!

No more to chiefs and ladies bright
The harp of Tara swells;
The chord, alone, that breaks at night,
Its tale of ruin tells:—
Thus freedom now so seldom wakes,
The only throb she gives
Is when some heart indignant breaks,
To show that still she lives!

George Gordon Byron

1788–1824

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

(1815)

"O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
Ducentium ortus ex animo: quater
Felix! in imo qui scatentem
Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit."
—*Gray's Poemata.*

I.

There's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay;
'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades so fast,
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, e'er youth itself be past.

II.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of happiness
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess:
The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in vain
The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never stretch again.

III.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself comes down;
It cannot feel *for others'* woes, it dare not dream its own;

That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where th appears.

IV.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth tract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more former hope of rest;
'Tis but as ivy leaves around the ruin'd turret wr
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and beneath.

V.

Oh could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I have
Or weep as I could once have wept o'er many a ish'd scene:
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all bra though they be,
So midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears flow to me.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

(From *Hebrew Melodies*, 1815)

I.

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
5 Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies

II.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear, their dwelling-place.

III.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

SONNET ON CHILLON

(Introduction to *The Prisoner of Chillon*)

(1816)

Eternal spirit of the chainless mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard!—*May* none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

(1816)

CANTO III.

III.

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,
The wandering outlaw of his own dark mind;
Again I seize the theme, then but begun,
And bear it with me, as the rushing wind
Bears the cloud onwards: in that Tale I find
The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,
O'er which all heavily the journeying years
Plod the last sands of life,—where not a flower appears.

. . . . . .

VIII.

Something too much of this:—but now 'tis past,
And the spell closes with its silent seal.
Long absent Harold re-appears at last;
He of the breast which fain no more would feel,
Wrung with the wounds which kill not, but ne'er heal;
Yet Time, who changes all, had altered him
In soul and aspect as in age: years steal
Fire from the mind as vigour from the limb;
And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim.

IX.

His had been quaff'd too quickly, and he found
The dregs were wormwood; but he fill'd again,
And from a purer fount, on holier ground,
And deem'd its spring perpetual; but in vain!
Still round him clung invisibly a chain

Which gall'd forever, fettering though unseen,
And heavy though it clank'd not; worn with pain,
Which pined although it spoke not, and grew keen,
Entering with every step he took through many a scene.

. . . . . .

XII.

But soon he knew himself the most unfit
Of men to herd with Man; with whom he held
Little in common; untaught to submit
His thoughts to others, though his soul was quell'd
In youth by his own thoughts; still uncompell'd,
He would not yield dominion of his mind
To spirits against whom his own rebell'd;
Proud though in desolation; which could find
A life within itself, to breathe without mankind.

XIII.

Where rose the mountains, there to him were friends;
Where roll'd the ocean, thereon was his home;
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, extends,
He had the passion and the power to roam;
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship; they spake
A mutual language, clearer than the tome
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake
For Nature's pages glass'd by sunbeams on the lake.

XIV.

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars,
Till he had peopled them with beings bright
As their own beams; and earth, and earth-born jars,
And human frailties, were forgotten quite:
Could he have kept his spirit to that flight

He had been happy; but this clay will sink
Its spark immortal, envying it the light
To which it mounts, as if to break the link
That keeps us from yon heaven which woos us
brink.

XV.

But in Man's dwellings he became a thing
Restless and worn, and stern and wearisome,
Droop'd as a wild-born falcon with clipt wing
To whom the boundless air alone were home
Then came his fit again, which to o'ercome,
As eagerly the barr'd-up bird will beat
His breast and beak against his wiry dome
Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the heat
Of his impeded soul would through his bosom ea

XVI.

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,
With naught of hope left, but with less of glo
The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
That all was over on this side the tomb,
Had made Despair a smilingness assume,
Which, though 'twere wild,—as on the pl
wreck
When mariners would madly meet their doo
With draughts intemperate on the sinking d
Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore to cl

. . . . . .

XVIII.

And Harold stands upon this place of sku
The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo
How in an hour the power which gave an
Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting t
In "pride of place" here last the eagle

Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,
Pierced by the shaft of banded nations through;
Ambition's life and labours all were vain;
He wears the shatter'd links of the world's broken chain.

. . . . . .

XXI.

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage-bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

XXII.

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
But, Hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

XXIII.

Within a window'd niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught *its tone with* Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,

His heart more truly knew that peal too
Which stretch'd his father on a bloody l
And roused the vengeance blood alone co
He rush'd into the field, and, foremost figh

XXIV.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and
And gathering tears, and tremblings of
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveli
And there were sudden partings, such as
The life from out young hearts, and chok
Which ne'er might be repeated; who coul
If ever more should meet those mutual
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn

XXV.

And there was mounting in hot haste: t
The mustering squadron, and the clatte
Went pouring forward with impetuous s
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar
And near, the beat of the alarming drun
Roused up the soldier ere the morning st
While throng'd the citizens with terror
Or whispering, with white lips—"The
come! they come!"

XXVI.

And wild and high the "Cameron's gathe
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Sa
How in the noon of night that pibroch
wage and shrill! But with the breat

Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansmen's ears!

XXVII.

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valour, rolling on the foe
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

XXVIII.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
Battle's magnificently-stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is cover'd thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent!

. . . . . .

LXXXV.

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwell in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's *troubled waters* for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing

To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been
moved.

LXXXVI.

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more

LXXXVII.

He is an evening reveller, who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy, for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

LXXXVIII.

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven!
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,

And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a star.

LXXXIX.

All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep:—
All heaven and earth are still: From the high host
Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain-coast,
All is concentr'd in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

XC.

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, where we are *least* alone;
A truth, which through our being then doth melt
And purifies from self: it is a tone,
The soul and source of music, which makes known
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm,
Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
Binding all things with beauty;—'twould disarm
The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

XCI.

Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places and the peak
Of *earth-o'ergazing* mountains, and thus take
A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek

The spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak,
Uprear'd of human hands. Come, and compare
Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy pray'r!

XCII.

The sky is changed!—and such a change—
Oh night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone clou
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

XCIII.

And this is in the night:—Most glorious night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

XCIV.

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted

Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted:
Love was the very root of the fond rage
Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed:
Itself expired, but leaving them an age
Of years all winters,—war within themselves to wage.

XCV.

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his way,
The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand:
For here, not one, but many, make their play,
And fling their thunderbolts from hand to hand,
Flashing and cast around: of all the band,
The brightest through these parted hills hath fork'd
His lightnings,—as if he did understand,
That in such gaps as desolation work'd,
There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein lurk'd.

XCVI.

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings! Ye!
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul
To make these felt and feeling, well may be
Things that have made me watchful; the far roll
Of your departing voices, is the knoll
Of what in me is sleepless,—if I rest.
But where of ye, oh tempests! is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human breast?
Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest?

XCVII.

Could I embody and unbosom now
That which is most within me,—could I wreak
My thoughts *upon* expression, and thus throw
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,

All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe—into *one* word,
And that one word were Lightning, I would speak
But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a swor

CANTO IV.

(1818)

LXXVIII.

Oh Rome! my country! city of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye!
Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

LXXIX.

The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe,
An empty urn within her wither'd hands,
Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago;
The Scipio's tomb contains no ashes now;
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,
Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distre

LXXX.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood, a
Fire,
Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride;
She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep, barbarian monarchs ride,

Where the car climb'd the Capitol; far and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a site:—
Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
And say, "here was, or is," where all is doubly night?

LXXXI.

The double night of ages, and of her,
Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt and wrap
All round us; we but feel our way to err:
The ocean hath his chart, the stars their map,
And Knowledge spreads them on her ample lap;
But Rome is as the desert, where we steer
Stumbling o'er recollections; now we clap
Our hands, and cry "Eureka!" it is clear—
When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

LXXXII.

Alas! the lofty city! and alas!
The trebly hundred triumphs! and the day
When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass
The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away!
Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,
And Livy's pictured page!—but these shall be
Her resurrection; all beside—decay.
Alas for earth, for never shall we see
That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was free!

. . . . . .

CLXXV.

But I forget.—My Pilgrim's shrine is won,
And he and I must part,—so let it be,—
His task *and mine alike* are nearly done;
Yet *once more let us look* upon the sea;

The midland ocean breaks on him and me,
And from the Alban Mount we now behold
Our friend of youth, that ocean, which when w
Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold
Those waves, we follow'd on till the dark Euxine

CLXXVI.

Upon the blue Symplegades: long years—
Long, though not very many, since have don
Their work on both; some suffering and some
Have left us nearly where we had begun:
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run,
We have had our reward—and it is here;
That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,
And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear
As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

CLXXVII.

Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place,
With one fair Spirit for my minister,
That I might all forget the human race,
And, hating no one, love but only her!
Ye Elements!—in whose ennobling stir
I feel myself exalted—Can ye not
Accord me such a being? Do I err
In deeming such inhabit many a spot?
Though with them to converse can rarely be our lo

CLXXVIII.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,

To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

CLXXIX.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

CLXXX.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay.

CLXXXI.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the *Armada's* pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

CLXXXII.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee-
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they
Thy waters wasted them while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou,
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

CLXXXIII.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's for
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime
The image of Eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, a

CLXXXIV.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

DON JUAN

(1821)

CANTO III.

XC.

And glory long has made the sages smile;
'Tis something, nothing, words, illusion, wind—
Depending more upon the historian's style
Than on the name a person leaves behind:
Troy owes to Homer what whist owes to Hoyle:
The present century was growing blind
To the great Marlborough's skill in giving knocks
Until his late Life by Archdeacon Coxe.

XCI.

Milton's the prince of poets—so we say;
A little heavy, but no less divine:
An independent being in his day—
Learn'd, pious, temperate in love and wine;
But his life falling into Johnson's way,
We're told this great high-priest of all the Nine
Was whipt at college—a harsh sire—odd spouse,
For the first Mrs. Milton left his house.

XCII.

All these are, *certes*, entertaining facts,
Like Shakespeare's stealing deer, Lord Bacon's bribes;
Like Titus' youth, and Caesar's earliest acts;
Like Burns (whom Dr. Currie well describes)
Like Cromwell's pranks;—but although truth exacts
These amiable descriptions from the scribes,
As most *essential to their* hero's story,
They *do not much* contribute to his glory.

XCIII.

All are not moralists, like Southey, when
He prated to the world of "Pantisocracy;"
Or Wordsworth unexcised, unhir'd, who then
Season'd his pedlar poems with democracy;
Or Coleridge, long before his flighty pen
Let to the Morning Post its aristocracy;
When he and Southey, following the same path,
Espoused two partners (milliners of Bath).

XCIV.

Such names at present cut a convict figure,
The very Botany Bay in moral geography;
Their loyal treason, renegado vigour,
Are good manure for their more bare biography.
Wordsworth's last quarto, by the way, is bigger
Than any since the birthday of typography;
A clumsy, frowzy poem, call'd the "Excursion"
Writ in a manner which is my aversion.

XCV.

He there builds up a formidable dyke
Between his own and others' intellect;
But Wordsworth's poem, and his followers, like
Joanna Southcote's Shiloh, and her sect,
Are things which in this century don't strike
The public mind,—so few are the elect;
And the new births of both their stale virginities
Have proved but dropsies taken for divinities.

. . . . . .

CI.

T' our tale.—The feast was over, the slaves gone,
The dwarfs and dancing girls had all retir'd;
The Arab lore and poet's song were done,
And every sound of revelry expir'd;

The lady and her lover, left alone,
The rosy flood of twilight sky admir'd;—
Ave Maria! o'er the earth and sea,
That heavenliest hour of Heaven is worthiest thee!

CII.

Ave Maria! blessed be the hour!
The time, the clime, the spot, where I so oft
Have felt that moment in its fullest power
Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft,
While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,
Or the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft,
And not a breath crept through the rosy air,
And yet the forest leaves seem stirr'd with prayer.

. . . . . .

CV.

Sweet hour of twilight!—in the solitude
Of the pine forest, and the silent shore
Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,
Rooted where once the Adrian wave flow'd o'er,
To where the last Cæsarean fortress stood,
Evergreen forest! which Boccaccio's lore
And Dryden's lay made haunted ground to me,
How have I loved the twilight hour and thee!

CVI.

The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,
Making their summer lives one ceaseless song,
Were the sole echoes, save my steed's and mine,
And vesper-bell's that rose the boughs along;
The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line,
His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the fair throng
Which learn'd from this example not to fly
From a true lover, shadow'd my mind's eye.

CVII.

Oh, Hesperus! thou bringest all good things—
Home to the weary, to the hungry cheer,
To the young bird the parent's brooding wings,
The welcome stall to the o'erlabour'd steer;
Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone clings,
Whate'er our household gods protect of dear,
Are gather'd round us by thy look of rest;
Thou bring'st the child, too, to the mother's brea

CVIII.

Soft hour! which wakes the wish and melts the
Of those who sail the seas, on the first day
When they from their sweet friends are torn apa
Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way
As the far bell of vesper makes him start,
Seeming to weep the dying day's decay;
Is this a fancy which our reason scorns?
Ah! surely nothing dies but something mourns!

Percy Bysshe Shelley

1792–1822

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

(1819)

I.

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Aut
being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leave
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fl

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving every where;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh, hear!

II.

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst: oh, hear!

III.

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue *Mediterranean*, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers
So sweet the sense faints picturing them! [illegible]
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far bel
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which
The sapless foliage of the ocean know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fea
And tremble and despoil themselves: oh, he

IV.

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and sh

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over hea
As then, when to outstrip thy skyey spee
Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne
striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore
Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed

A heavy weight of hours has chained
One too like thee: tameless, and swift

V.

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

TO A SKYLARK

(1820)

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from Heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And *singing still* dost soar, and soaring ever *singest.*

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are bright'ning
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is j

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven,
In the broad day-light
Thou art unseen,—but yet I hea
delight,

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see—we feel that it

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when Night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, an
overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rai

Like a Poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love,—which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet those heavy-wingèd thieves:

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous and clear and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, Sprite or Bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine;
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus *Hymenæal,*
Or triumphal chaunt,

Matched with thine, would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some l
want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields or waves or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignora
pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be;
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee;
Thou lovest—but ne'er knew love's sad sati

Waking or asleep
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream—
Or how could thy notes flow in such a c
stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of s
thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate and pride and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should com

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then—as I am listening now.

THE CLOUD

(1820)

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skyey bowers,
Lightning my pilot sits;
In a *cavern under is* fettered the thunder,
It struggles and howls by fits;

Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea;
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stre
The Spirit he loves remains;
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue s
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead;
As on, the jag of a mountain crag,
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And when sunset may breathe, from the L
beneath,
Its ardours of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of heaven above,
With wings folded I rest, on mine airy nes
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbèd maiden, with white fire laden
Whom mortals call the Moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor
By the midnight breezes strewn;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's th
The stars peep behind her and peer;
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,

Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the sun's throne with a burning zone,
And the moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanos are dim, and the stars reel and swim,
When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,—
The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch, through which I march,
With hurricane, fire, and snow,
When the powers of the air are chained to my chair,
Is the million-colored bow;
The sphere-fire above its soft colors wove,
While the moist earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of earth and water,
And the nursling of the sky;
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain, when with never a stain
The pavilion of heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams,
Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,
And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
I arise and unbuild it again.

ADONAIS

(1821)

I.

I weep for Adonais—he is dead!
Oh, weep for Adonais! though our tears
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a h
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all yea
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure comp
And teach them thine own sorrow; Say: "V
me
Died Adonais; till the Future dares
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity!"

II.

Where wert thou, mighty Mother, when he
When thy Son lay, pierced by the sl
which flies
In darkness? where was lorn Urania
When Adonais died? With veilèd eyes,
'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise
She sate, while one, with soft enamou
breath,
Rekindled all the fading melodies,
With which, like flowers that mock the c
beneath,
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk
death.

III.

Oh, weep for Adonais—he is dead!
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep
Yet wherefore? Quench within their burn
bed
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart ke

Like his a mute and uncomplaining sleep;
For he is gone where all things wise and fair
Descend. Oh, dream not that the amorous Deep
Will yet restore him to the vital air;
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our despair.

IV.

Most musical of mourners, weep again!
Lament anew, Urania!—He died,
Who was the sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide
Trampled and mocked with many a loathèd rite
Of lust and blood; he went, unterrified,
Into the gulf of death; but his clear Sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth, the third among the sons of light.

V.

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Not all to that bright station dared to climb;
And happier they their happiness who knew,
Whose tapers yet burn through that night of time
In which suns perished; others more sublime,
Struck by the envious wrath of man or God,
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime;
And some yet live, treading the thorny road,
Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's serene abode.

VI.

But now, thy youngest, dearest one has perished,
The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew,
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished
And fed with true-love tears instead of dew;

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the las
The bloom, whose petals, nipt before they
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste
The broken lily lies—the storm is overpast.

VII.

To that high Capital, where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,
He came; and bought, with price of p
breath,
A grave among the eternal.—Come away!
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;
Awake him not! surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill

VIII.

He will awake no more, oh, never more!
Within the twilight chamber spreads apac
The shadow of white Death, and at the do
Invisible Corruption waits to trace
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-plac
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and aw
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to defe
So fair a prey, till darkness and the law
Of change, shall o'er his sleep the mortal cu
draw.

IX.

Oh, weep for Adonais!—The quick Dreams
The passion-wingèd ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the liv
streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he t

The love which was its music, wander not,—
Wander no more, from kindling brain to brain,
But droop there, whence they sprung; and mourn their lot
Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet pain,
They ne'er will gather strength, or find a home again.

X.

And one with trembling hands clasps his cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries,
"Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies
A tear some Dream has loosened from his brain."
Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!
She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain
She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain.

XI.

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs as if embalming them;
Another clipt her profuse locks, and threw
The wreath upon him, like an anadem,
Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem;
Another in her wilful grief would break
Her bow and wingèd reeds, as if to stem
A greater loss with one which was more weak;
And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen cheek.

XII.

Another Splendour on his mouth alit,
That mouth, whence it was wont to draw
breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the guar
wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath
With lightning and with music: the da
death
Quenched its caress upon his icy lips;
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath
Of moonlight vapour, which the cold night cli
It flushed through his pale limbs, and past to
eclipse.

XIII.

And others came . . . Desires and Adoratio
Wingèd Persuasions and veiled Destinies,
Splendours, and Glooms, and glimmering
carnations
Of hopes and fears, and twilight Fantasies
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by
gleam
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp;—the moving pomp mi
seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal strea

XIV.

All he had loved, and molded into thought,
From shape, and hue, and odour, and sw
sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watch tower, and her hair
bound,

Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,
Dimmed the aërial eyes that kindle day;
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

XV.

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those for whose disdain she pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds:—a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.

XVI.

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw down
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown,
For whom should she have waked the sullen year?
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear,
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
Thou, Adonais; wan they stand and sere
Amid the faint companions of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears; odour, to sighing *ruth.*

XVII.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale,
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain;
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain
Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
As Albion wails for thee: the curse of Cain
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest!

XVIII.

Ah woe is me! Winter is come and gone,
But grief returns with the revolving year;
The airs and streams renew their joyous tone
The ants, the bees, the swallows reappear;
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Seasone bier;
The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
And build their mossy homes in field and brere
And the green lizard and the golden snake,
Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance awake.

XIX.

Through wood and stream and field and hil and Ocean,
A quickening life from the Earth's heart ha burst,
As it has ever done, with change and motion,
From the great morning of the world whe first

God dawned on Chaos; in its stream immersed
The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer light;
All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst,
Diffuse themselves, and spend in love's delight,
The beauty and the joy of their renewèd might.

XX.

The leprous corpse touched by this spirit tender,
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
Like incarnations of the stars, when splendour
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death
And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath.
Nought we know dies. Shall that alone which knows
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
By sightless lightning?—the intense atom glows
A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose.

XXI.

Alas! that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
Whence are we, and why are we? of what scene
The actors or spectators? Great and mean
Meet massed in death, who lends what life must borrow.
As long as skies are blue, and fields are green,
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow *month* with woe, and year wake *year to* sorrow.

XXII.

He will awake no more, oh, never more!
"Wake thou," cried Misery, "childless Moth
rise
Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy hea
core,
A wound more fierce than his with tears a
sighs."
And all the Dreams that watched Urani
eyes,
And all the Echoes whom their sister's son
Had held in holy silence, cried, "Arise!"
Swift as a Thought by the snake Mem
stung,
From her ambrosial rest the fading Splend
sprung.

XXIII.

She rose like an autumnal night, that spri
Out of the East, and follows wild and drea
The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
Had left the Earth a corpse,—sorrow
fear
So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania;
So saddened round her like an atmosphere
Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way
Even to the mournful place where Adonais la

XXIV.

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with st
and steel,
And human hearts which, to her airy tread
Yielding not, wounded the invisible

Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell;
And barbèd tongues, and thoughts more sharp than they,
Rent the soft Form they never could repel,
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

XXV.

In the death-chamber for a moment Death,
Shamed by the presence of that living Might,
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and life's pale light
Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear delight.
"Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,
As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
Leave me not!" cried Urania; her distress
Roused Death; Death rose and smiled, and met her vain caress.

XXVI.

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
And in my heartless breast and burning brain
That word, that kiss, shall all thoughts else survive,
With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
Of thee, my Adonais! I would give
All that I am to be as thou now art!
But I *am chained* to Time, and cannot thence *depart!*

XXVII.

"O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of
Too soon, and with weak hands though mi
heart
Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?
Defenceless as thou wert, oh, where was th
Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the sp
Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sp
The monsters of life's waste had fled from
like deer.

XXVIII.

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the de
The vultures, to the conqueror's banner t
Who feed where Desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion;—how
fled,
When, like Apollo, from his golden bow
The Pythian of the age one arrow sped
And smiled!—The spoilers tempt no s
blow,
They fawn on the proud feet that spurn the
ing low.

XXIX.

"The sun comes forth, and many re
spawn;
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn,
And the immortal stars awake again;

So is it in the world of living men:
A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night."

XXX.

Thus ceased she: and the mountain shepherds came,
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent;
The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame
Over his living head like Heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument,
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song
In sorrow; from her wilds Ierne sent
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,
And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.

XXXI.

Midst others of less note, came one frail Form,
A phantom among men; companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess,
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,
Acteon-like, and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,
And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,
Pursued, *like raging* hounds, their father and *their prey.*

XXXII.

A pardlike Spirit beautiful and swift—
A Love in desolation masked;—a Powe
Girt round with weakness;—it can scarc
The weight of the superincumbent hou
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,
A breaking billow;—even whilst we spe
Is it not broken? On the withering flo
The killing sun smiles brightly: on a cl
The life can burn in blood, even while th
may break.

XXXIII.

His head was bound with pansies overb
And faded violets, white, and pied, and
And a light spear topped with a cypress
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy tresse
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasped it; c
crew
He came the last, neglected and apart;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the h
dart.

XXXIV.

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears; well kne
gentle band
Who in another's fate now wept his own,
As in the accents of an unknown land
He sung new sorrow; sad Urania scann
The Stranger's mien, and murmured:
art thou?"
He answered not, but with a sudden h

Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,
Which was like Cain's or Christ's—oh! that it
should be so!

XXXV.

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-
bed,
In mockery of monumental stone,
The heavy heart heaving without a moan?
If it be He, who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honoured the departed
one;
Let me not vex with inharmonious sighs
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

XXXVI.

Our Adonais has drunk poison—oh,
What deaf and viperous murderer could crown
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?
The nameless worm would now itself disown;
It felt, yet could escape the magic tone
Whose prelude held all envy, hate and wrong,
But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song,
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre
unstrung.

XXXVII.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame!
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou nonentity blot on a remembered name!
But be thyself, and know thyself to be!

And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow;
Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to thee
Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt—as now.

XXXVIII.

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion kites that scream below;
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now.
Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the same,
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of shame.

XXXIX.

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep—
He hath awakened from the dream of life—
'Tis we, who, lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance, strike with our spirit's knife
Invulnerable nothings. *We* decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

XL.

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray in vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

XLI.

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead, not he;
Mourn not for Adonais.—Thou young Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou
Air,
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst
thrown
O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its
despair!

XLII.

He is made one with Nature: there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never wearied
love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

XLIII.

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely: he doth bear
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compel
ling there,
All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks it
flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear,
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven'
light.

XLIV.

The splendours of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they climl
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When loft
thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there
And move like winds of light on dark and storm
air.

XLV.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mort
thought,
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton
Rose pale,—his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he fought
And as he fell and as he lived and loved,
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,

Arose; and Lucan, by his death approved;
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reproved.

XLVI.

And many more, whose names on Earth are dark,
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.
"Thou art become as one of us," they cry;
"It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid an Heaven of song.
Assume thy wingèd throne, thou Vesper of our throng!"

XLVII.

Who mourns for Adonais? oh, come forth,
Fond wretch! and know thyself and him aright.
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous Earth;
As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Satiate the void circumference; then shrink
Even to a point within our day and night;
And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the brink.

XLVIII.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre
Oh, not of him, but of our joy: 'tis naught
That *ages, empires,* and religions there
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;

For such as he can lend,—they borrow not
Glory from those who made the world their prey;
And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

XLIX.

Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness;
And where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,
And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses dress
The bones of Desolation's nakedness,
Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access,
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread.

L.

And gray walls moulder round, on which dull Time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath
A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death,
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath.

LI.

Here pause: these graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each; and if the seal is set,
Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,
Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou find
Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

LII.

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments.—Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek!
Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

LIII.

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my Heart?
Thy hopes are gone before; from all things here
They have departed; thou shouldst now depart!
A light is past from the revolving year,

And man, and woman; and what still is dear
Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles,—the low wind whispers near;
'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,
No more let Life divide what Death can join together.

LIV.

That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move,
That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love
Which through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst, now beams on me
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

LV.

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and sphered skies are riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

TIME

(1821)

Unfathomable Sea! whose waves are years,
Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe
Are brackish with the salt of human tears!
Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb and flow
Claspest the limits of mortality,
And sick of prey, yet howling on for more,
Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable shore;
Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
Who shall put forth on thee,
Unfathomable Sea?

TO ——

(1821)

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory;
Odours, when sweet violets sicken;
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou are gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

TO NIGHT

(1821)

I.

Swiftly walk over the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where all the long and lone daylight
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear,—
Swift be thy flight!

II.

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day;
Kiss her until she be wearied out;
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and lan
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
Come, long-sought!

III.

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was g
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to his rest
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

IV.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
Wouldst thou me?
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noontide bee,
Shall I nestle at thy side?
Would'st thou me?—and I replied,
No, not thee!

V.

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon;
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, beloved Night,—
Swift be thine approaching flight,
Come soon, soon!

A LAMENT
(1821)

I.

O world! O life! O time!
On whose last steps I climb,
Trembling at that where I had stood before;
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more—oh, never more!

II.

Out of the day and night
A joy has taken flight;
Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar,
Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
No more—oh, never more!

TO ——
(1821)

I.

One word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdained
For thee to disdain it;
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother,
And pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

II.

I can give not what men call love,
But wilt thou accept not
The *worship* the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not,—

The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

John Keats

1795-1821

THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

(1820)

I.

St. Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

II.

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:
The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem to freeze,
Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails:
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb oratories,

He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

III.

Northward he turneth through a little door,
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue
Flatter'd to tears this aged man and poor;
But no—already had his deathbell rung;
The joys of all his life were said and sung;
His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' eve:
Another way he went, and soon among
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to grieve.

IV.

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft;
And so it chanc'd, for many a door was wide,
From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide:
The level chambers, ready with their pride,
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests:
The carved angels, ever eager-ey'd,
Star'd, where upon their heads the cornice rests,
With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise on their breasts.

V.

At length burst in the argent revelry,
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
Numerous as shadows haunting faerily
The brain, newstuff'd in youth, with triumphs gay

Of old romance. These let us wish away,
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,
On love, and wing'd St. Agnes' saintly care,
As she had heard old dames full many times
declare.

VI.

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' eve,
Young virgins might have visions of delight,
And soft adorings from their loves receive
Upon the honey'd middle of the night,
If ceremonies due they did aright;
As, supperless to bed they must retire,
And couch supine their beauties, lily white;
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they
desire.

VII.

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:
The music, yearning like a God in pain,
She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine
Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping train
Pass by—she heeded not at all: in vain
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,
And back retir'd; not cool'd by high disdain,
But she saw not: her heart was otherwhere:
She sigh'd for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the
year.

VIII.

She danc'd along with vague, regardless eyes,
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and
short:
The hallow'd hour was near at hand: she sigh'd
Amid the timbrels, and the throng'd resort

Of whisperers in anger, or in sport;
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,
Hoodwink'd with faery fancy; all amort,
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

IX.

So, purposing each moment to retire,
She linger'd still. Meantime, across the moors,
Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire
For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,
Buttress'd from moonlight, stands he, and implores
All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
But for one moment in the tedious hours,
That he might gaze and worship all unseen;
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in sooth such things have been.

X.

He ventures in: let no buzz'd whisper tell:
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords
Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous citadel:
For him, those chambers held barbarian hordes,
Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,
Whose very dogs would execrations howl
Against his lineage: not one breast affords
Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,
Save one old beldame, weak in body and in soul.

XI.

Ah, happy chance! the aged creature came,
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,
To where *he stood,* hid from the torch's flame,
Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond

The sound of merriment and chorus blanc
He startled her; but soon she knew his face
And grasp'd his fingers in her palsied hand
Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee from
place;
"They are all here to-night, the whole bl
thirsty race!

XII.

"Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish Hi
brand;
"He had a fever late, and in the fit
"He cursed thee and thine, both house
land:
"Then there's that old Lord Maurice, no
whit
"More tame for his grey hairs—Alas me! fl
"Flit like a ghost away."—"Ah, Gossip d
"We're safe enough; here in this armchair
"And tell me how"— "Good Saints
here, not here:
"Follow me, child, or else these stones will be
bier."

XIII.

He follow'd through a lowly arched way,
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume,
And as she mutter'd "Well-a-well-a-day!"
He found him in a little moonlight room,
Pale, lattic'd, chill, and silent as a tomb.
"Now tell me where is Madeline," said he,
"O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom
"Which none but secret sisterhood may see,
"When they St. Agnes' wool are weav
piously."

XIV.

"St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve—
"Yet men will murder upon holy days:
"Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,
"And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays,
"To venture so: it fills me with amaze
"To see thee, Porphyro!—St. Agnes' Eve!
"God's help! my lady fair the conjurer plays
"This very night: good angels her deceive!
"But let me laugh awhile, I've mickle time to grieve."

XV.

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,
Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone
Who keepeth clos'd a wondrous riddle-book,
As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told
His lady's purpose; and he scarce could brook
Tears, at the thought of those enchantments cold,
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

XVI.

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,
Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart
Made purple riot: then doth he propose
A stratagem, that makes the beldame start:
"A cruel man and impious thou art:
"Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep, and dream
"Alone with her good angels, far apart
"From wicked men like thee. Go, go!—I deem
"Thou canst not surely be the same that thou *didst seem.*"

XVII.

"I will not harm her, by all saints I swe
Quoth Porphyro: "O may I ne'er find gr
"When my weak voice shall whisper it
prayer,
"If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
"Or look with ruffian passion in her face
"Good Angela, believe me by these tear
"Or I will, even in a moment's space,
"Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's
"And beard them, though they be more
than wolves and bears."

XVIII.

"Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble sou
"A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churc
thing,
"Whose passing-bell may ere the midnigh
"Whose prayers for thee, each morn and
ing,
"Were never miss'd."—Thus plaining,
she bring
A gentler speech from burning Porphyro
So woful, and of such deep sorrowing,
That Angela gives promise she will do
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or

XIX.

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hi
Him in a closet, of such privacy
That he might see her beauty unespy'd,
And win perhaps that night a peerless br
While legion'd fa'ries pac'd the coverlet,
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-e

Never on such a night have lovers met,
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.

XX.

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the Dame:
"All cates and dainties shall be stored there
"Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambour frame
"Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to spare,
"For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare
"On such a catering trust my dizzy head.
"Wait here, my child, with patience; kneel in prayer
"The while: Ah! thou must needs the lady wed,
"Or may I never leave my grave among the dead."

XXI.

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.
The lover's endless minutes slowly pass'd;
The dame return'd and whisper'd in his ear
To follow her; with aged eyes aghast
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain
The maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd, and chaste;
Where Porphyro took covert, pleas'd amain.
His poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain.

XXII.

Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade,
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmed maid,
Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware:

With silver taper's light, and pious care,
She turn'd, and down the aged gossip led
To a safe level matting. Now prepare,
Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;
She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove fray'
and fled.

XXIII.

Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:
She clos'd the door, she panted, all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
As though a tongueless nightingale should swel
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in he
dell.

XXIV.

A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,
All garlanded with carven imag'ries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot
grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of
queens and kings.

XXV.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fai
breast,
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,

And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven:—Porphyro grew faint:
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

XXVI.

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;
Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one;
Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

XXVII.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppress'd
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day;
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain;
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

XXVIII.

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,
Porphyro gaz'd upon her empty dress,
And *listened to her* breathing, if it chanced
To wake into a slumberous tenderness;

Which when he heard, that minute did
And breath'd himself: then from the
crept,
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,
And over the hush'd carpet, silent, step
And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where, l
fast she slept.

XXIX.

Then by the bed-side where the faded r
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half anguish'd, threw ther
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet
O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!
The boisterous, midnight, festive claric
The kettle-drum and far-heard clarion
Affray his ears, though but in dying to
The hall-door shuts again, and all the
gone.

XXX.

And still she slept an azure-lidded slee
In blanched linen, smooth, and lavend
While he forth from the closet brought
Of candied apple, quince, and plu
gourd;
With jellies soother than the creamy c
And lucent syrops, tinct with cinnamon
Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd
From Fez; and spiced dainties, every
From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Leba

XXXI.

These delicates he heap'd with glowing
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathed silver: sumptuous they sta
In the retired quiet of the night,

Filling the chilly room with perfumed light—
"And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!
"Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:
"Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,
"Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache."

XXXII.

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved arm
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream
By the dusk curtains:—'twas a midnight charm
Impossible to melt as iced stream:
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam;
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:
It seem'd he never, never could redeem
From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes;
So mus'd awhile, entoil'd in woofed phantasies.

XXXIII.

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—
Tumultuous,—and,—in chords that tenderest be,
He play'd an ancient ditty, long since mute,
In Provence call'd, "La belle dame sans mercy:"
Close to her ear touching the melody;—
Wherewith disturb'd, she utter'd a soft moan:
He ceas'd—she panted quick—and suddenly
Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone:
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured-stone.

XXXIV.

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:
*There was a pain*ful change, that nigh expell'd
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep:

At which fair Madeline began to weep,
And moan forth witless words with many sigh,
While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep;
Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous ey
Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so drear ingly.

XXXV.

"Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even now
"Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,
"Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;
"And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear;
"How chang'd thou art! how pallid, chill, a drear!
"Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
"Those looks immortal, those complainin dear!
"Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,
"For if thou diest, my Love, I know not whe to go."

XXXVI.

Beyond a mortal man impassion'd far
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,
Ethereal, flush'd, and like a throbbing star
Seen 'mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose;
Into her dream he melted, as the rose
Blended its odour with the violet,—
Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind blo
Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet
Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon hat set.

XXXVII.

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet
"This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"
'Tis dark: the iced gusts still rave and beat:
"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!

"Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.—
"Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?
"I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,
"Though thou forsakest a deceived thing;—
"A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing."

XXXVIII.

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!
"Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?
"Thy beauty's shield, heart-shap'd and vermeil dy'd?
"Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest
"After so many hours of toil and quest,
"A famish'd pilgrim,—sav'd by miracle.
"Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest
"Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st well
"To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

XXXIX.

"Hark! 'tis an elfin-storm from faery land,
"Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:
"Arise—arise! the morning is at hand;—
"The bloated wassailers will never heed:—
"Let us away, my love, with happy speed;
"There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—
"Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead:
"Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,
"For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee."

XL.

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
For there were sleeping dragons all around,
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears—
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they *found.*—

In all the house was heard no human sound
A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by e
door;
The arras rich with horseman, hawk, :
hound,
Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty flo

XLI.

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide ha
Like phantoms, to the iron porch, they gli
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
With a huge empty flagon by his side:
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook
hide,
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:—
The chains lie silent on the footworn stone
The key turns, and the door upon its hi
groans.

XLII.

And they are gone: ay, ages long ago
These lovers fled away into the storm.
That night the Baron dreamt of many a wo
And all his warrior-guests, with shade
form
Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-wor
Were long be-nightmar'd. Angela the old
Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face defo
The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,
For aye unsought-for slept amongst his a
cold.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

(1819)

I.

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
  My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
  One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
  But being too happy in thine happiness,—
    That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
      In some melodious plot
  Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
  Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

II.

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been
  Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
  Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt
    mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
  Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
    With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
      And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
  And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

III.

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
  What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, *the* fever, and the fret
  Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;

Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hair
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-ey'd despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow

IV.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne
Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

V.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine
Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

VI.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme
To take into the air my quiet breath;

Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

VII.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

VIII.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

(Written 1819)

I.

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
  Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
  A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape
  Of deities or mortals, or of both,
    In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
  What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
  What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

II.

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
  Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
  Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
  Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
    Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
  She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
    For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

III.

Ah! happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
  Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
  For ever piping songs for ever new;

More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

IV.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

V.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

TO AUTUMN

(Written 1819 ?)

I.

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
  Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
  With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
  And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
    To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel-shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
  And still more, later flowers for the bees,
  Until they think warm days will never cease,
    For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

II.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
  Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
  Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
  Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
    Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
  Steady thy laden head across a brook;
  Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
    Thou watchest the last oozings hours by

III.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are
they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly
bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

(1820)

I.

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
Alone and palely loitering;
The sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

II.

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

III.

I see a lily on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever dew;
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

IV.

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful, a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

V.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long;
For sideways would she lean and sing
A faery's song.

VI.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She look'd at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

VII.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew;
And sure in language strange she said,
I love thee true.

VIII.

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she gaz'd and sighed deep;
And there I shut her wild sad eyes—
So kissed to sleep.

IX.

And there we slumber'd on the moss,
And there I dream'd, ah woe betide,
The latest dream I ever dream'd,
On the cold hill side.

X.

I saw pale kings, and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
Who cry'd—"La belle Dame sans merci
Hath thee in thrall!"

XI.

I saw their starv'd lips in the gloom,
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke, and found me here
On the cold hill side.

XII.

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake
And no birds sing.

SONNETS

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

(Written 1816)

XI.

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer rul'd as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till *I heard Chapman* speak out loud and bold:

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He star'd at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

SONNET

(June, 1816)

To one who has been long in city pent,
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair
And open face of heaven,—to breathe a pra
Full in the smile of the blue firmament.
Who is more happy, when, with heart's content
Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair
Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair
And gentle tale of love and languishment?
Returning home at evening, with an ear
Catching the notes of Philomel,—an eye
Watching the sailing cloudlets' bright career,
He mourns that day so soon has glided by:
E'en like the passage of an angel's tear
That falls through the clear ether silently.

XV.

ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET

(Written December 30th, 1816)

The poetry of earth is never dead:
When all the birds are faint with the hot s
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will ru
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown m
That is the Grasshopper's—he takes the lea
In summer luxury,—he has never done
With his delights; for when tired out with
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.

The poetry of earth is ceasing never:
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there
shrills
The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
The Grasshopper's among some grassy hills

LAST SONNET

(Written on a Blank Page in Shakespeare's Poems, Facing "A Lover's Complaint")

(Written 1820)

Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—
No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

James Henry Leigh Hunt

1784–1859

TO THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET

(1816)

Green little vaulter in the sunny grass,
Catching your heart up at the feel of June,
Sole voice *that's* heard amidst the lazy noon,
When even the bees lag at the summoning brass;

And you, warm little housekeeper, who class
With those who think the candles come too soon,
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass;

Oh sweet and tiny cousins, that belong,
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,
Both have your sunshine; both, though small, are strong
At your clear hearts; and both seem giv'n to earth
To sing in thoughtful ears this natural song—
In doors and out, summer and winter, Mirth.

Walter Savage Landor

1775–1864

MILD IS THE PARTING YEAR, AND SWEET

(Collected Works, 1846)

Mild is the parting year, and sweet
The odour of the falling spray;
Life passes on more rudely fleet,
And balmless is its closing day.
I wait its close, I court its gloom,
But mourn that never must there fall
Or on my breast or on my tomb
The tear that would have sooth'd it all.

AH WHAT AVAILS THE SCEPTERED RACE

(From the same)

Ah what avails the sceptered race,
Ah what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
I consecrate to thee.

YES; I WRITE VERSES

(From the same)

Yes; I write verses now and then,
But blunt and flaccid is my pen,
No longer talkt of by young men
As rather clever:
In the last quarter are my eyes,
You see it by their form and size;
Is it not time then to be wise?
Or now or never.
Fairest that ever sprang from Eve!
While Time allows the short reprieve,
Just look at me! would you believe
'Twas once a lover?
I cannot clear the five-bar gate
But, trying first its timber's state,
Climb stiffly up, take breath, and wait
To trundle over.
Thro' gallopade I cannot swing
The entangling blooms of Beauty's spring:
I cannot say the tender thing,
Be't true or false,
And am beginning to opine
Those girls are only half-divine
Whose waists yon wicked boys entwine
In giddy waltz.
I fear that arm above that shoulder,
I wish them wiser, graver, older,
Sedater, and no harm if colder
And panting less.
Ah! people were not half so wild
In former days, when starchly mild,
Upon her high-heel'd Essex smiled
The Brave Queen Be

TO ROBERT BROWNING

(From the same)

There is delight in singing, tho' none hear
Beside the singer; and there is delight
In praising, tho' the praiser sit alone
And see the prais'd far off him, far above.
Shakespeare is not our poet, but the world's,
Therefore on him no speech! and brief for the
Browning! Since Chaucer was alive and hale
No man hath walkt along our roads with step
So active, so inquiring eye, or tongue
So varied in discourse. But warmer climes
Give brighter plumage, stronger wing: the bree
Of Alpine heights thou playest with, borne on
Beyond Sorrento and Amalfi, where
The Siren waits thee, singing song for song.

INTRODUCTION TO THE LAST FRUIT OFF AN OLD TREE

(1853)

I strove with none, for none was worth my str
Nature I loved, and, next to Nature, Art;
I warmed both hands before the fire of Life;
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

Bryan Waller Procter

(Barry Cornwall)

1787–1874

A PETITION TO TIME

(From *Poems*, 1850)

Touch us gently, Time!
Let us glide adown thy stream
Gently,—as we sometimes glide
Through a quiet dream!

Humble voyagers are We,
Husband, wife, and children three—
(One is lost,—an angel, fled
To the azure overhead!)

Touch us gently, Time!
We've not proud nor soaring wings:
Our ambition, *our* content
Lies in simple things.
Humble voyagers are We,
O'er Life's dim unsounded sea,
Seeking only some calm clime:—
Touch us *gently*, gentle Time!

Hartley Coleridge

1796–1849

SONG

(From *Poems*, 1833)

She is not fair to outward view
As many maidens be,
Her loveliness I never knew
Until she smiled on me;
Oh! then I saw her eye was bright,
A well of love, a spring of light.

But now her looks are coy and cold,
To mine they ne'er reply,
And yet I cease not to behold
The love-light in her eye:
Her very frowns are fairer far,
Than smiles of other maidens are.

Charles Lamb

1775–1834

TO HESTER

(1805)

When maidens such as Hester die,
Their place ye may not well supply,
Though ye among a thousand try,
With vain endeavour.

A month or more hath she been dead,
Yet cannot I by force be led
To think upon the wormy bed,
And her together.

A springy motion in her gait,
A rising step, did indicate
Of pride and joy no common rate,
That flushed her spirit.

I know not by what name beside
I shall it call;—if 'twas not pride,
It was a joy to that allied,
She did inherit.

Her parents held the Quaker rule,
Which doth the human feeling cool,
But she was train'd in Nature's school,
Nature had blest her.

A waking eye, a prying mind,
A heart that stirs, is hard to bind,
A hawk's keen sight ye cannot blind,
Ye could not Hester.

My sprightly neighbour, gone before
To that unknown and silent shore,
Shall we not meet, as heretofore,
Some summer morning,

When from thy cheerful eyes a ray
Hath struck a bliss upon the day,
A bliss that would not go away,
A sweet fore-warning?

Thomas Hood

1798–1845

THE DEATH BED

(From *Poems*, 1825)

We watched her breathing thro' the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied—
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
Another morn than ours.

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

("Drowned! drowned!"—*Hamlet*)

(First published in *Hood's Magazine*, 1844)

One more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements;
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.—

Touch her not scornfully;
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful:
Past all dishonor,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammily.

Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
Oh! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed:
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurled—
Anywhere, anywhere
Out of the world.

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran,—
Over the brink of it,
Picture it—think of it,
Dissolute Man!
Lave in it, drink of it,
Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently,—kindly,—
Smooth, and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Thro' muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fix'd on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurred by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest.—
Cross her hands humbly
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast.

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behavior,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour!

PART FIFTH

VICTORIAN VERSE

Thomas Babington Macaulay

1800–1859

BATTLE OF IVRY

(1842)

Now glory to the Lord of Hosts, from whom all glories are!
And glory to our Sovereign Liege, King Henry of Navarre!
Now let there be the merry sound of music and of dance,
Through thy corn-fields green and sunny vines,
O pleasant land of France!
And thou, Rochelle, our own Rochelle, proud city of the waters,
Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy mourning daughters.
As thou wert constant in our ills, be joyous in our joy;
For cold and stiff and still are they who wrought thy walls annoy.
Hurrah! hurrah! a single field hath turn'd the chance of war!
Hurrah! hurrah! for Ivry, and King Henry of Navarre.
Oh! how our hearts were beating, when, at the dawn of day,
We saw the *army of the League drawn out in long array;*

With all its priest-led citizens, and all its reb
peers,
And Appenzel's stout infantry, and Egmont
Flemish spears;
There rode the blood of false Lorraine, the curse
of our land;
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon
in his hand;
And, as we look'd on them, we thought of Seine's
empurpled flood,
And good Coligni's hoary hair all dabbled with his
blood;
And we cried unto the living God, who rules the
fate of war,
To fight for His own holy name, and Henry of
Navarre.

The king is come to marshal us, in all his armo
drest;
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon hi
gallant crest.
He look'd upon his people, and a tear was in hi
eye;
He look'd upon the traitors, and his glance wa
stern and high.
Right graciously he smil'd on us, as roll'd fro
wing to wing,
Down all our line, in deafening shout: "God sav
our lord, the king!"
"And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full wel
he may,
For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody
fray,
Press where ye see my white plume shine amids
the ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet o
Navarre."

Hurrah! the foes are moving. Hark to the mingled din,
Of fife, and steed, and trump, and drum, and roaring culverin.
The fiery duke is pricking fast across St. Andre's plain,
With all the hireling chivalry of Guelders and Almayne.
Now by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of France,
Charge for the golden lilies now upon them with the lance!
A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand spears in rest,
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the snow-white crest;
And in they burst, and on they rush'd, while, like a guiding star,
Amidst the thickest carnage blaz'd the helmet of Navarre.

Now, God be prais'd, the day is ours: Mayenne hath turn'd his rein,
D'Aumale hath cried for quarter; the Flemish Count is slain,
Their ranks are breaking like thin clouds before a Biscay gale;
The field is heap'd with bleeding steeds, and flags, and cloven mail;
And then we thought on vengeance, and all along our van,
"Remember St. Bartholomew!" was pass'd from man to man.
But out spake gentle Henry—"No Frenchman is my foe:
Down, *down with* every foreigner, but let your *brethren go.*"

was there ever such a K
or in war,
our sovereign lord, King Henry, the soldier o
Navarre?
ight well fought all the Frenchmen who fought
for France to-day;
And many a lordly banner God gave them for a
prey.
But we of the religion have borne us best in fight;
And the good lord of Rosny hath ta'en the cor-
net white—
Our own true Maximilian the cornet white hath
ta'en;
The cornet white, with crosses black the flag of
false Lorraine.
Up with it high; unfurl it wide;—that all the
host may know
How God hath humbled the proud house which
wrought His Church such woe.
Then on the ground, while trumpets sound their
loudest point of war,
Fling the red shreds a footcloth meet for Henry
of Navarre.

Ho! maidens of Vienna; ho! matrons of Luzerne
Weep, weep, and rend your hair for those wh
never shall return.
Ho! Philip, send, for charity, thy Mexic
pistoles,
That Antwerp monks may sing a mass for
poor spearmen's souls.
Ho! gallant nobles of the League, look that
arms be bright;
of St. Genevieve, keep wat
the tyrant, c

And glory
Na

And mock'd the counsel of the wise and the valor
of the brave.
Then glory to His holy name, from whom all
glories are;
And glory to our sovereign lord, King Henry of
Navarre!

Alfred Tennyson

1809–1892

LOCKSLEY HALL

(From *Poems*, 1842)

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet
'tis early morn:
Leave me here, and when you want me, sound
upon the bugle-horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the
curlews call,
Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over
Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the
sandy tracts,
And the hollow-ocean ridges roaring into cata-
racts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I
went to rest,
Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the
West.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the
mellow shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver
braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing
youth sublime
With the fairy tales of science, and the long resu
of Time;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful lan
reposed;
When I clung to all the present for the promis
that it closed.

When I dipt into the future far as human ey
could see;
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonde
that would be.—

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon th
robin's breast;
In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himse
another crest;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the bu
nish'd dove;
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly tur
to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than shou
be for one so young,
And her eyes on all my motions with a mu
observance hung.

And I said, 'My Cousin Amy, speak, and spe
the truth to me,
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being se
to thee.'

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a colo
and a light,
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in t
northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden
storm of sighs—
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel
eyes—

Saying, 'I have hid my feelings, fearing they
should do me wrong;'
Saying, 'Dost thou love me, cousin?' weeping,
'I have loved thee long.'

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in
his glowing hands
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden
sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all
the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd
in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear
the copses ring,
And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the full-
ness of the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the
stately ships,
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching
of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my Amy, mine
no more!
O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren,
barren shore!

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all
songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a
shrewish tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy?—having known me
—to decline
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart
than mine!

Yet it shall be: thou shalt lower to his level day
by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sym
pathise with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is: thou art mated
with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have weight
to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have
spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer
than his horse.

What is this? his eyes are heavy: think not they
are glazed with wine.
Go to him: it is thy duty: kiss him: take his hand
in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is over
wrought:
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with
thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to
understand—
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee
with my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the
heart's disgrace,
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last
embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the
strength of youth!
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the
living truth!

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest
Nature's rule!
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straitened fore-
head of the fool!

Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst thou
less unworthy proved—
Would to God—for I had loved thee more than
ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears
but bitter fruit?
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be
at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of
years should come
As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clang-
ing rookery home.

Where is comfort? in division of the records of
the mind?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I
knew her, kind?

I remember one that perish'd: sweetly did she
speak and move:
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was
to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the
love she bore?
No—she *never loved* me truly: love is love for-
evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorn'd of devils! this is true
the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering
happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy
heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is
on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art
staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the
shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to
his drunken sleep,
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that
thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the 'Never, never,' whisper'd by
the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing
of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kind-
ness on thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow: get thee to
thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender
voice will cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine; a lip to drain thy
trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down: my latest rival
brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the
mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness
not his due.
Half is thine and half is his: it will be worthy of
the two.

O, I see thee, old and formal, fitted to thy petty
part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a
daughter's heart.

'They were dangerous guides the feelings—she
herself was not exempt—
Truly, she herself had suffer'd'—Perish in thy
self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy! wherefore
should I care?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by
despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting
upon days like these?
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to
golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the mar-
kets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy: what is that which
I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foe-
man's ground,
When the ranks are roll'd in vapour, and the
winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that
Honour feels,
And *the nations do* but murmur, snarling at each
other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field.

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new:
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm;

Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd,
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint:
Science moves, but slowly, slowly, creeping on from point to point:

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion creeping nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the *process of the* suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his
youthful joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat forever like
a boy's?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I
linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more
and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he
bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the still-
ness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on
the bugle-horn,
They to whom my foolish passion were a target
for their scorn:

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such
moulder'd string?
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved
so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness! woman's
pleasure, woman's pain—
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in
a shallower brain:

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions
match'd with mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water
unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing.
Ah for some retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life be-
gan to beat;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father, evil-starr'd;—
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit—there to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruit'd tree—
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and breathing space;
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their *lances in the* sun;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the ra
bows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserai
books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy! but I *know* n
words are wild,
But I count the gray barbarian lower than tl
Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of ot
glorious gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a bea
with lower pains!

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me wer
sun or clime?
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files o
time—

I that rather held it better men should peris
one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze lik
Joshua's moon in Ajalon!

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, fo
ward let us range,
Let the great world spin forever down the ring
ing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into th
younger day:
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle o
Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me a
when life begun:
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash th
lightnings, weigh the Sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall!
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapour from the margin, blackening over heath and holt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

ULYSSES

(From the same)

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;
For *always roaming* with a hungry heart

Much have I seen and known; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governmen
Myself not least, but honour'd of them all;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose m
fades
Forever and forever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard my
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thoug
This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make mil
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the spher
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I
There lies the port; the vessel puffs her s
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mar
Souls that have toil'd and wrought, and th
with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took

The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;
Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

THE EPIC

(INTRODUCTION TO MORTE D'ARTHUR)

(From *Poems*, 1842)

At Francis Allen's on the Christmas-eve,—
The game of forfeits done—the girls all kiss'd
Beneath the sacred bush and past away—
The parson Holmes, the poet Everard Hall,

The host, and I sat round the wassail-bowl,
Then half-way ebb'd: and there we held a
How all the old honour had from Christma
Or gone or dwindled down to some old gam
In some odd nooks like this; till I, tired o
With cutting eights that day upon the por
Where, three times slipping from the oute
I bump'd the ice into three several stars,
Fell in a doze; and half-awake I heard
The parson taking wide and wider sweeps
Now harping on the church-commissioners,
Now hawking at Geology and schism;
Until I woke, and found him settled down
Upon the general decay of faith
Right thro' the world, 'at home was little
And none abroad: there was no anchor, no
To hold by.' Francis, laughing, clapt his
On Everard's shoulder, with 'I hold by hin
'And I,' quoth Everard, 'by the wassail-bow
'Why yes,' I said, 'we knew your gift that
At college: but another which you had,
I mean of verse (for so we held it then),
What came of that?' 'You know,' said I
'he burnt
His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve boo
And then to me demanding why? 'Oh, sir,
He thought that nothing new was said, or
Something so said 'twas nothing—that a tr
Looks freshest in the fashion of the day:
God knows: he has a mint of reasons: ask.
It pleased *me* well enough.' 'Nay, nay,'
Hall,
'Why take the style of those heroic times?
For nature brings not back the Mastodon,
Nor we those times; and why should any ma
*Re*model models? these twelve books of mir
Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth

Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt.'
'But I,'
Said Francis, 'pick'd the eleventh from this hearth
And have it; keep a thing, its use will come.
I hoard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes.'
He laugh'd, and I, tho' sleepy, like a horse
That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd my ears;
For I remember'd Everard's college fame
When we were Freshmen: then at my request
He brought; and the poet little urged,
But with some prelude of disparagement,
Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and aes,
Deep-chested music, and to this result.

MORTE D'ARTHUR

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea;
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fallen in Lyonesse about their Lord,
King Arthur: then, because his wound was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.
Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
'The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we

Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,—
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more—but let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest h
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword—and how I row'd across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king:
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In after time, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere:
Watch what thou seëst, and lightly bring
word.'
To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
'It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.
A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee w
So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he ste
And in the moon athwart the place of tom
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient me
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sa
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, ste
down
By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.
There drew he forth the brand Excalibu

And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw: but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
'Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave?
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crags.'

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:
'Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word.'

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud,
'*And if indeed I* cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note

Should thus be lost forever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many m
What good should follow this, if this were do
What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he doe
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt? but were this kep
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty king
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, "King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deep
Upon the hidden bases of the hills."
So might some old man speak in the aftertim
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honour and much fame were l
So spake he, clouded with his own conceit
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded king
Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavil
'What is it thou hast seen? or what hast hea
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
'I heard the water lapping on the crag
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'
To whom replied King Arthur, much in w
'Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou a
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou would'st betray me for the precious h

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence:
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'
Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur:
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandished him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.
Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:
'Now see I by thy eyes that this is done.
Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?'
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
'Sir king, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;
But *when I look'd* again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd
Three times, and drew him under in the mer
And answer made King Arthur, breat
hard:
'My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were g
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my wei
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die.'
So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not w
Then took with care, and kneeling on one kn
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid ha
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.
But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the ki
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, 'Qui
quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridg
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he wall
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thoughts drove him, like a go
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he ba
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.
Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,

Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.
Then murmur'd Arthur, 'Place me in the barge,'
And to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the king, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood: for his face was white
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the king;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,

Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.
Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,
'Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble chance,
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty world;
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds.'
And slowly answered Arthur from the barge:
'The old order changeth, yielding place to new
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within Himself make pure! but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by
prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy
voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them
friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seëst—if indeed I go—

(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.'
So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

Here ended Hall, and our last light, that long
Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness, flared and fell:
At which the Parson, sent to sleep with sound,
And waked with silence, grunted 'Good!' but we
Sat rapt: it was the tone with which he read—
Perhaps some modern touches here and there
Redeem'd it from the charge of nothingness—
Or else we loved the man, and prized his work;
I know not: but we sitting, as I said,
The cock crew loud; as at that time of year
The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn:
Then Francis, muttering, like a man ill-used,
'There now—that's nothing!' drew a little back,
And drove his heel into the smoulder'd log,
That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue:
And so to bed; where yet in sleep I seem'd
To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
Point after point; till on to dawn, when dreams,
Began to feel the truth and stir of day,

To me, methought, who waited with a crowd,
There came a bark that, blowing forward, bore
King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
Of stateliest port; and all the people cried,
'Arthur is come again; he cannot die.'
Then those that stood upon the hills behind
Repeated—'Come again, and thrice as fair;
And, further inland, voices echoed—'Come
With all good things, and war shall be no more.'
At this a hundred bells began to peal,
That with the sound I woke, and heard indeed
The clear church-bells ring in the Christian
morn.

SIR GALAHAD

(From the same)

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel:
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favours fall!
For them I battle till the end,
To save from shame and thrall:

But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine;
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill;
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns:
Then by some secret shrine I ride;
I hear a voice but none are there;
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark;
I leap on board: no helmsman steers:
I float till all is dark.
A gentle sound, an awful light!
Three angels bear the holy Grail:
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Oh, blessed vision! blood of God!
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When *on my goodly* charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go,

The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height;
No branchy thicket shelter yields;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armour that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up, and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
'O just and faithful knight of God
Ride on! the prize is near.'
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange
By bridge and ford, by park and
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide
Until I find the holy Grail.

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

(From the same)

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

TEARS, IDLE TEARS

(Song from *The Princess*, edition 1850)

'Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

'Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,

Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

'Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer d
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering sq
So sad, so strange, the days that are no mor

'Dear as remembered kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more

BUGLE SONG

(From the same)

The splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flyi
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying,

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, d

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:

Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow forever and forever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

IN MEMORIAM

(From *In Memoriam*, 1850)

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest Life in man and brute;
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why,
He thinks he was not made to die;
And thou hast made him: thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou:
Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith: we cannot know;
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness: let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight;
We mock thee when we do not fear:
But help thy foolish ones to bear;
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seem'd my sin in me;
What seem'd my worth since I began;
For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,
Thy creature, whom I found so fair.
I trust he lives in thee, and there
I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
Confusions of a wasted youth;
Forgive them where they fail in truth,
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

MAUD

(From *Maud*, 1855)

XVIII.

I.

I have led her home, my love, my only friend.
There is none like her, none.
And never yet so warmly ran my blood
And sweetly, on and on
Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for end,
Full to the banks, close on the promised good.

II.

None like her, none.
Just now the dry-tongued laurels' pattering talk
Seem'd her light foot along the garden walk,
And shook my heart to think she comes once more;
But even then I heard her close the door,
The gates of Heaven are closed, and she is gone.

III.

There is none like her, none.
Nor will be when our summers have deceased.
O, art thou sighing for Lebanon
In the long breeze that streams to thy delicious East,
Sighing for Lebanon,
Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here increased,
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,
And looking to the South, and fed
With honey'd rain and delicate air,
And haunted by the starry head
Of her whose gentle will has changed my fate,
And made my life a perfumed altar-flame;
And over whom thy darkness must have spread
With such delight as theirs of old, thy great
Forefathers of the thornless garden, there
Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from whom she came.

IV.

Here will I lie, while these long branches sway,
And yon fair stars that crown a happy day
Go in and out as if at merry play,
Who am no more so all forlorn,
As when it seem'd far better to be born

To labour and the mattock-harden'd hand,
Than nursed at ease and brought to understand
A sad astrology, the boundless plan
That makes you tyrants in your iron skies,
Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,
Cold fires, yet with power to burn and brand
His nothingness into man.

V.

But now shine on, and what care I,
Who in this stormy gulf have found a pearl
The countercharm of space and hollow sky,
And do accept my madness, and would die
To save from some slight shame one simple girl.

VI.

Would die; for sullen-seeming Death may give
More life to Love than is or ever was
In our low world, where yet 'tis sweet to live.
Let no one ask me how it came to pass;
It seems that I am happy, that to me
A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

VII.

Not die; but live a life of truest breath,
And teach true life to fight with mortal wrongs.
O why should Love, like men in drinking-songs,
Spice his fair banquet with the dust of death?
Make answer, Maud my bliss,
Maud made my Maud by that long loving kiss,
Life of my life, wilt thou not answer this?
'The dusky strand of Death inwoven here
With dear Love's tie, makes Love himself more
dear.'

VIII.

Is that enchanted moan only the swell
Of the long waves that roll in yonder bay?
And hark the clock within, the silver knell
Of twelve sweet hours that past in bridal white,
And died to live, long as my pulses play;
But now by this my love has closed her sight
And given false death her hand, and stol'n away
To dreamful wastes where footless fancies dwell
Among the fragments of the golden day.
May nothing there her maiden grace affright!
Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy spell.
My bride to be, my evermore delight,
My own heart's heart, my ownest own, farewell;
It is but for a little space I go:
And ye meanwhile far over moor and fell
Beat to the noiseless music of the night!
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the glow
Of your soft splendours that you look so bright?
I have climbed nearer out of lonely Hell.
Beat, happy stars, timing with things below,
Beat with my heart more blest than heart can tell,
Blest, but for some dark undercurrent woe
That seems to draw—but it shall not be so:
Let all be well, be well.

CROSSING THE BAR

(1889)

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be *no moaning* of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

Robert Browning

1812–1889

MY LAST DUCHESS

FERRARA

(First published, 1836)

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now; Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will 't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first

Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat:" such stuf
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace—all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good! but
thanked
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave com-
mands;
Then all *smiles* stopped together. There she
stands

As if alive. Will 't please you rise? We
The company below, then. I repeat
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretense
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avow
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, tho
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bro
me!

SONG

(From *Pippa Passes*, 1841)

The year 's at the spring
The day 's at the morn;
Morning 's at seven;
The hillside 's dew-pearled;
The lark 's on the wing;
The snail 's on the thorn:
God 's in his heaven—
All 's right with the world!

HOME THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

(From *Bells and Pomegranates* No. VII., 1845)

I.

Oh, to be in England now that April's the
And whoever wakes in England sees, some
ing, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brush-wood
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bo
In England—now!

II.

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower
—Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

THE GUARDIAN-ANGEL:

A PICTURE AT FANO

(From *Men and Women*, 1855)

I.

Dear and great Angel, wouldst thou only leave
That child, when thou hast done with him, for me!
Let me sit all the day here, that when eve
Shall find performed thy special ministry,
And time come for departure, thou, suspending
Thy flight, may'st see another child for tending,
Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

II.

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no more,
From where thou stand'st now, to where I gaze,
And suddenly my head be covered o'er

With those wings, white above the child who prays
Now on that tomb—and I shall feel thee guarding
Me, out of all the world; for me, discarding
Yon heaven thy home, that waits and opes its door!

III.

I would not look up thither past thy head
Because the door opes, like that child, I know,
For I should have thy gracious face instead,
Thou bird of God! And wilt thou bend me low
Like him, and lay, like his, my hands together,
And lift them up to pray, and gently tether
Me as thy lamb there, with thy garment's spread?

IV.

If this was ever granted, I would rest
My head beneath thine, while thy healing hands
Close-covered both my eyes beside thy breast,
Pressing the brain which too much thought expands
Back to its proper size again, and smoothing
Distortion down till every nerve had soothing,
And all lay quiet, happy and supprest.

V.

How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired!
I think how I should view the earth and skies
And sea, when once again my brow was bared
After thy healing, with such different eyes.

O world, as God has made it! all is beauty;
And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.
What further may be sought for or declared?

. . . . . .
. . . . . .

ANDREA DEL SARTO

CALLED "THE FAULTLESS PAINTER"

(From *Men and Women*, 1855)

But do not let us quarrel any more,
No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for once:
Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.
You turn your face, but does it bring your heart?
I'll work then for your friend's friend, never fear,
Treat his own subject after his own way,
Fix his own time, accept too his own price,
And shut the money into this small hand
When next it takes mine. Will it? tenderly?
Oh, I'll content him,—but to-morrow, Love!
I often am much wearier than you think,
This evening more than usual, and it seems
As if—forgive now—should you let me sit
Here by the window with your hand in mine
And look a half hour forth on Fiesole,
Both of one mind, as married people use,
Quietly, quietly the evening through,
I might get up to-morrow to my work
Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.
To-morrow, how you shall be glad for this!
Your soft hand is a woman of itself,
And mine the man's bared breast she curls inside.
Don't count the time lost, neither; you must
serve
For each of the five pictures we require:

It saves a model. So! keep looking so—
My serpentining beauty, rounds on rounds!
—How could you ever prick those perfect ears,
Even to put the pearl there! oh, so sweet—
My face, my moon, my everybody's moon,
Which everybody looks on and calls his,
And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,
While she looks—no one's: very dear, no less.
You smile? why, there's my picture ready m
There's what we painters call our harmony!
A common grayness silvers every thing,—
All in a twilight, you and I alike
—You, at the point of your first pride in me
(That's gone, you know),—but I, at every po
My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned d
To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole.
There's the bell clinking from the chapel-top
That length of convent-wall across the way
Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside;
The last monk leaves the garden; days decrea
And autumn grows, autumn in every thing.
Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape
As if I saw alike my work and self
And all that I was born to be and do,
A twilight-piece. Love, we are in God's han
How strange now looks the life he makes us l
So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!
I feel he laid the fetter: let it lie!
This chamber for example—turn your head—
All that's behind us! You don't understand
Nor care to understand about my art,
But you can hear at least when people speak
And that cartoon, the second from the door
—It is the thing, Love! so such things should
be—
Behold Madonna!—I am bold to say.
I can do with my pencil what I know,

What I see, what at bottom of my heart
I wish for, if I ever wish so deep—
Do easily, too—when I say, perfectly,
I do not boast, perhaps: yourself are judge
Who listened to the Legate's talk last week,
And just as much they used to say in France.
At any rate 'tis easy, all of it!
No sketches first, no studies, that's long past:
I do what many dream of all their lives.
—Dream? strive to do, and agonize to do,
And fail in doing. I could count twenty such
On twice your fingers, and not leave this town,
Who strive—you don't know how the others strive
To paint a little thing like that you smeared
Carelessly passing with your robes afloat,—
Yet do much less, so much less, Someone says,
(I know his name, no matter)—so much less!
Well, less is more, Lucrezia: I am judged.
There burns a truer light of God in them,
In their vexed beating stuffed and stopped-up brain,
Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to prompt
This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's hand of mine.
Their works drop groundward, but themselves, I know,
Reach many a time a heaven that's shut to me,
Enter and take their place there sure enough,
Though they come back and cannot tell the world.
My works are nearer heaven, but I sit here.
The sudden blood of these men! at a word—
Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it boils too.
I, painting from myself and to myself,
Know what I do, am unmoved by men's blame
Or their praise either. Somebody remarks
Morello's *outline* there is wrongly traced,
His hue mistaken; what of that? or else,

Rightly traced and well ordered; what of that?
Speak as they please, what does the mountain care?
Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for? All is silver-gray,
Placid and perfect with my art: the worse!
I know both what I want and what might gain;
And yet how profitless to know, to sigh
"Had I been two, another and myself,
Our head would have o'erlooked the world—" No doubt.
Yonder's a work now, of that famous youth
The Urbinate who died five years ago.
('Tis copied, George Vasari sent it me.)
Well, I can fancy how he did it all,
Pouring his soul, with kings and popes to see,
Reaching, that heaven might so replenish him,
Above and through his art—for it gives way;
That arm is wrongly put—and there again—
A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,
Its body, so to speak: its soul is right,
He means right—that, a child may understand.
Still, what an arm! and I could alter it:
But all the play, the insight and the stretch—
Out of me, out of me! And wherefore out?
Had you enjoined them on me, given me soul,
We might have risen to Rafael, I and you!
Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I think—
More than I merit, yes, by many times.
But had you—oh, with the same perfect brow,
And perfect eyes, and more than perfect mouth
And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird
The fowler's pipe, and follows to the snare—
Had you, with these the same, but brought a mind!
Some women do so. Had the mouth there urged
"*God* and the glory! never care for gain.

The present by the future, what is that?
Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo!
Rafael is waiting: up to God, all three!"
I might have done it for you. So it seems:
Perhaps not. All is as God overrules.
Beside, incentives come from the soul's self:
The rest avail not. Why do I need you?
What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?
In this world, who can do a thing, will not;
And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:
Yet the will's somewhat—somewhat, too, the power—
And thus we half-men struggle. At the end,
God, I conclude, compensates, punishes.
'Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,
That I am something underrated here,
Poor this long while, despised, to speak the truth.
I dared not, do you know, leave home all day,
For fear of chancing on the Paris lords.
The best is when they pass and look aside;
But they speak sometimes; I must bear it all.
Well may they speak! That Francis, that first time,
And that long festal year at Fontainebleau!
I surely then could sometimes leave the ground,
Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,
In that humane great monarch's golden look,—
One finger in his beard or twisted curl
Over his mouth's good mark that made the smile,
One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,
The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,
I painting proudly with his breath on me,
All his court round him, seeing with his eyes,
Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of souls
Profuse, my hand kept plying by those hearts,—
And, best of all, this, this, this face beyond,
This in the background, waiting on my work,

To crown the issue with a last reward!
A good time, was it not, my kingly days?
And had you not grown restless . . . but I
know—
'Tis done and past; 'twas right, my instinct said
Too live the life grew, golden and not gray,
And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun should tempt
Out of the grange whose four walls make his
world.
How could it end in any other way?
You called me, and I came home to your heart.
The triumph was, to have ended there; then, if
I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?
Let my hands frame your face in your hair's
gold,
You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!
"Rafael did this, Andrea painted that;
The Roman's is the better when you pray,
But still the other's Virgin was his wife"—
Men will excuse me. I am glad to judge
Both pictures in your presence; clearer grows
My better fortune, I resolve to think.
For, do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,
Said one day Agnolo, his very self,
To Rafael . . . I have known it all these
years . . .
(When the young man was flaming out his
thoughts
Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,
Too lifted up in heart because of it)
"Friend, there's a certain sorry little scrub
Goes up and down our Florence, none cares how
Who, were he set to plan and execute
As you are, pricked on by your popes and kings,
Would bring the sweat into that brow of yours!
To Rafael's!—And indeed the arm is wrong.
I hardly dare . . . yet, only you to see,

Give the chalk here—quick, thus the line should
go!
Ay, but the soul! he's Rafael! rub it out!
Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,
(What he? why, who but Michel Agnolo?
Do you forget already words like those?)
If really there was such a chance, so lost,—
Is, whether you're—not grateful—but more
pleased.
Well, let me think so. And you smile indeed!
This hour has been an hour! Another smile?
If you would sit thus by me every night
I should work better, do you comprehend?
I mean that I should earn more, give you more.
See, it is settled dusk now; there's a star;
Morello's gone, the watch-lights show the wall,
The cue-owls speak the name we call them by.
Come from the window, Love,—come in, at last,
Inside the melancholy little house
We built to be so gay with. God is just.
King Francis may forgive me: oft at nights
When I look up from painting, eyes tired out,
The walls become illumined, brick by brick
Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright gold,
That gold of his I did cement them with!
Let us but love each other. Must you go?
That Cousin here again? he waits outside?
Must see you—you, and not with me? Those
loans?
More gaming debts to pay? you smiled for that?
Well, let smiles buy me! have you more to spend?
While hand and eye and something of a heart
Are left me, work's my ware, and what's it worth?
I'll pay my fancy. Only let me sit
The gray remainder of the evening out,
Idle, *you call it,* and muse perfectly
How I could paint, were I but back in France,

One picture, just one more—the Virgin's face,
Not yours this time! I want you at my side
To hear them—that is, Michel Agnolo—
Judge all I do and tell you of its worth.
Will you? To-morrow, satisfy your friend.
I take the subjects for his corridor,
Finish the portrait out of hand—there, there,
And throw him in another thing or two
If he demurs; the whole should prove enough
To pay for this same Cousin's freak. Beside
What's better and what's all I care about,
Get you the thirteen scudi for the ruff!
Love, does that please you? Ah, but what d
he,
The Cousin! what does he to please you more?

I am grown peaceful as old age to-night.
I regret little, I would change still less.
Since there my past life lies, why alter it?
The very wrong to Francis!—it is true
I took his coin, was tempted and complied,
And built this house and sinned, and all is said
My father and my mother died of want.
Well, had I riches of my own? you see
How one gets rich! Let each one bear his lot
They were born poor, lived poor, and poor t
died:
And I have labored somewhat in my time
And not been paid profusely. Some good son
Paint my two hundred pictures—let him try!
No doubt, there's something strikes a balan
Yes,
You love me quite enough, it seems to-night.
This must suffice me here. What would o
have?
In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one mo
chance—

Four great walls in the New Jerusalem
Meted on each side by the angel's reed,
For Leonard, Rafael, Agnolo and me
To cover—the three first without a wife,
While I have mine! So—still they overcome
Because there's still Lucrezia,—as I choose.

Again the Cousin's whistle! Go, my Love.

PROSPICE

(From *Dramatis Personæ*, 1864)

Fear death?—to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go;
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forebore,
And bade me creep past.

No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers,
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
*Of pain, dark*ness and cold.

For sudden the worst turns the best to the br
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that r
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace ou
pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee ag
And with God be the rest!

RABBI BEN EZRA

(From the same)

I.

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made
Our times are in His hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, no
afraid!"

II.

Not that, amassing flowers,
Youth sighed, "Which rose make ours,
Which lily leave and then as best recall?"
Not that, admiring stars,
It yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars;
Mine be some figured flame which blends, tr
scends them all!"

III.

Not for such hopes and fears
Annulling youth's brief years,

Do I remonstrate; folly wide the mark!
Rather I prize the doubt
Low kinds exist without,
Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark.

IV.

Poor vaunt of life indeed,
Were man but formed to feed
On joy, to solely seek and find and feast;
Such feasting ended, then
As sure an end to men;
Irks care the crop-full bird? Frets doubt the maw-crammed beast?

V.

Rejoice we are allied
To That which doth provide
And not partake, effect and not receive!
A spark disturbs our clod;
Nearer we hold of God
Who gives, than of His tribes that take, I must believe.

VI.

Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
Be our joys three-parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!

VII.

For *thence*,—a paradox
Which comforts while it mocks,—

Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:
What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me:
A brute I might have been, but would not sin
i' the scale.

VIII.

What is he but a brute
Whose flesh hath soul to suit,
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs want play
To man, propose this test—
Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its lon
way?

IX.

Yet gifts should prove their use:
I own the Past profuse
Of power each side, perfection every turn:
Eyes, ears took in their dole,
Brain treasured up the whole;
Should not the heart beat once "How good t
live and learn?"

X.

Not once beat "Praise be Thine!
I see the whole design,
I, who saw Power, see now Love perfect too:
Perfect I call Thy plan:
Thanks that I was a man!
Maker, remake complete,—I trust what Thc
shalt do!"

XI.

For pleasant is this flesh;
Our soul, in its rose-mesh

Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for rest:
Would we some prize might hold
To match those manifold
Possessions of the brute,—gain most, as we did best!

XII.

Let us not always say,
"Spite of this flesh to-day
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!"
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry "All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul!"

XIII.

Therefore I summon age
To grant youth's heritage,
Life's struggle having so far reached its term:
Thence shall I pass, approved
A man, for aye removed
From the developed brute; a God though in the germ.

XIV.

And I shall thereupon
Take rest, ere I be gone
Once more on my adventure brave and new:
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armor to indue.

XV.

Youth ended, I shall try
My gain or loss thereby;

Leave the fire-ashes, what survives is gold:
And I shall weigh the same,
Give life its praise or blame:
Young, all lay in dispute; I shall know, being

XVI.

For note, when evening shuts,
A certain moment cuts
The deed off, calls the glory from the gray:
A whisper from the west
Shoots—"Add this to the rest,
Take it and try its worth: here dies another d

XVII.

So, still within this life,
Though lifted o'er its strife,
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at last,
"This rage was right i' the main,
That acquiescence vain:
The Future I may face now I have proved
Past."

XVIII.

For more is not reserved
To man with soul just nerved
To act to-morrow what he learns to-day:
Here, work enough to watch
The Master work, and catch
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's
play.

XIX.

As it was better, youth
Should strive, through acts uncouth,
Toward making, than repose on aught fo
made!

So, better, age, exempt
From strife, should know, than tempt
Further. Thou waitedst age: wait death, nor be afraid!

XX.

Enough now, if the Right
And Good and Infinite
Be named here, as thou callest thy hand thine own,
With knowledge absolute,
Subject to no dispute
From fools that crowded youth, nor let thee feel alone.

XXI.

Be there, for once and all,
Severed great minds from small,
Announced to each his station in the Past!
Was I, the world arraigned,
Were they, my soul disdained,
Right? Let age speak the truth and give us peace at last!

XXII.

Now, who shall arbitrate?
Ten men love what I hate,
Shun what I follow, slight what I receive;
Ten, who in ears and eyes
Match me: we all surmise,
They, this thing, and I, that: whom shall my soul believe?

XXIII.

Not on the vulgar mass
Called "work," must sentence pass,

Things done, that took the eye and had the pri
O'er which, from level stand,
The low world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could value
a trice:

XXIV.

But all, the world's coarse thumb
And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account;
All instincts immature,
All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled
man's amount:

XXV.

Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and
caped;
All I could never be,
All, men ignored in me,
This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pit
shaped.

XXVI.

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,
That metaphor! and feel
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our cla
Thou, to whom fools propound,
When the wine makes its round,
"*Since* life fleets, all is change; the Past g
seize to-day!"

XXVII.

Fool! All that is, at all,
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure:
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be:
Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter and clay endure.

XXVIII.

He fixed thee mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest:
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

XXIX.

What though the earlier grooves,
Which ran the laughing loves,
Around thy base, no longer pause and press?
What though, about thy rim,
Skull-things in order grim
Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner stress?

XXX.

Look not thou down but up!
To uses of a cup,
The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's peal,
The new wine's foaming flow,
The Master's lips aglow!
Thou, *heaven's* consummate cup, what needst *thou with* earth's wheel?

XXXI.

But I need, now as then,
Thee, God, who moldest men;
And since, not even while the whirl was worst,
Did I—to the wheel of life
With shapes and colors rife,
Bound dizzily—mistake my end, to slake Thy thirst:

XXXII.

So, take and use Thy work:
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim!
My times be in Thy hand!
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same!

EPILOGUE

(From *Asolando*, 1890)

At the midnight in the silence of the sleep-time
When you set your fancies free,
Will they pass to where—by death, fools think imprisoned—
Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so,
—Pity me?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!
What had I on earth to do
With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly?
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless did I drivel
—Being—who?

One who never turned his back but marched
breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong
would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should
be,
"Strive and thrive!" cry "Speed,—fight on, fare
ever
There as here!"

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

1809–1861

A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

(From *Poems*, 1844)

I.

What was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon-fly on the river.

II.

He tore *out a reed*, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river:

The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

III.

High on the shore sat the great god Pan,
While turbidly flowed the river;
And hacked and hewed as a great god can,
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of the leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

IV.

He cut it short, did the great god Pan
(How tall it stood in the river!),
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
And notched the poor dry empty thing
In holes, as he sat by the river.

V.

"This is the way," laughed the great god Pan
(Laughed while he sat by the river),
"The only way, since gods began
To make sweet music, they could succeed."
Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed
He blew in power by the river.

VI.

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!
Piercing sweet by the river!
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
Came back to dream on the river.

VII.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man:
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain,—
For the reed which grows nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds in the river.

SONNETS

CHEERFULNESS TAUGHT BY REASON

I think we are too ready with complaint
In this fair world of God's. Had we no hope
Indeed beyond the zenith and the slope
Of yon grey blank of sky, we might grow faint
To muse upon eternity's constraint
Round our aspirant souls; but since the scope
Must widen early, is it well to droop,
For a few days consumed in loss and taint?
O pusillanimous Heart, be comforted
And, like a cheerful traveller, take the road,
Singing beside the hedge. What if the bread
Be bitter in thine inn, and thou unshod
To meet the flints? At least it may be said,
"Because the way is *short*, I thank thee, God."

THE PROSPECT

Methinks we do as fretful children do,
Leaning their faces on the window-pane
To sigh the glass dim with their own breath's stain,
And shut the sky and landscape from their view:
And thus, alas, since God the maker drew
A mystic separation 'twixt those twain,
The life beyond us, and our souls in pain,

We miss the prospect which we are called unto
By grief we are fools to use. Be still and strong
O man, my brother! hold thy sobbing breath,
And keep thy soul's large window pure from
wrong
That so, as life's appointment issueth,
Thy vision may be clear to watch along
The sunset consummation-lights of death.

WORK

What are we set on earth for? Say, to toil;
Nor seek to leave thy tending of the vines
For all the heat o' the day, till it declines,
And Death's mild curfew shall from work assoil.
God did anoint thee with His odorous oil,
To wrestle, not to reign; and He assigns
All thy tears over, like pure crystallines,
For younger fellow-workers of the soil
To wear for amulets. So others shall
Take patience, labour, to their heart and hand,
From thy hand and thy heart and thy brave cheer
And God's grace fructify through thee to all.
The least flower, with a brimming cup may stanc
And share its dew-drop with another near.

(From *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, 1850)

I.

I thought once how Theocritus had sung
Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for ye
Who each one in a gracious hand appears
To bear a gift for mortals, old or young:
And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,
I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,

Those of my own life, who by turns had flung
A shadow across me. Straightway I was 'ware,
So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move
Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair;
And a voice said in mastery, while I strove,—
"Guess now who holds thee?"—"Death," I said.
But, there,
The silver answer rang,—"Not Death, but Love."

VI.

Go from me. Yet I feel that I shall stand
Henceforward in thy shadow. Nevermore
Alone upon the threshold of my door
Of individual life, I shall command
The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand
Serenely in the sunshine as before,
Without the sense of that which I forbore—
Thy touch upon the palm. The widest land
Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart in mine
With pulses that beat double. What I do
And what I dream include thee, as the wine
Must taste of its own grapes. And when I sue
God for myself, He hears that name of thine,
And sees within my eyes the tears of two.

XXXV.

If I leave all for thee, wilt thou exchange
And be all to me? Shall I never miss
Home-talk and blessing and the common kiss
That comes to each in turn, nor count it strange,
When I look up, to drop on a new range
Of walls and floors, another home than this?
Nay, wilt thou fill that place by me which is
Filled by dead eyes too tender to know change?
That's *hardest.* *If to* conquer love, has tried,
To conquer grief, tries more, as all things prove;

For grief indeed is love and grief beside.
Alas, I have grieved so I am hard to love.
Yet love me—wilt thou? Open thine heart wide,
And fold within the wet wings of thy dove.

XLIII.

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being, and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

Richard Chevenix Trench

1807–1886

I.

Some murmur when their sky is clear,
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue.
And some with thankful love are filled,
If but one streak of light,
One ray of God's good mercy, gild
The darkness of their night.

II.

In palaces are hearts that ask,
In discontent and pride,
Why life is such a dreary task,
And all good things denied.
And hearts in poorest huts admire
How love has in their aid
(Love that not ever seems to tire)
Such rich provision made.

Francis William Bourdillon

1852–

THE NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND EYES

The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

Ebenezer Elliott

1781–1849

A POET'S EPITAPH

Stop, Mortal! Here thy brother lies,
The Poet of the Poor.
His *books were rivers*, woods, and skies,
The *meadow, and* the moor;

His teachers were the torn hearts wail,
  The tyrant and the slave,
The street, the factory, the jail,
  The palace—and the grave!
Sin met thy brother everywhere!
  And is thy brother blamed?
From passion, danger, doubt, and care,
  He no exemption claim'd.
The meanest thing, earth's feeblest worm,
  He fear'd to scorn or hate;
But, honouring in a peasant's form
  The equal of the great,
He bless'd the Steward, whose wealth makes
  The poor man's little more;
Yet loath'd the haughty wretch that takes
  From plunder'd labour's store.
A hand to do, a head to plan,
  A heart to feel and dare—
Tell man's worst foes, here lies the man
  Who drew them as they are.

PLAINT

Dark, deep, and cold the current flows
Unto the sea where no wind blows,
Seeking the land which no one knows.

O'er its sad gloom still comes and goes
The mingled wail of friends and foes,
Borne to the land which no one knows.

Why shrieks for help yon wretch, who goes
With millions, from a world of woes,
Unto the land which no one knows?

Though myriads go with him who goes,
Alone he goes where no wind blows,
Unto the land which no one knows.

For all must go where no wind blows,
And none can go for him who goes;
None, none return whence no one knows.

Yet why should he who shrieking goes
With millions, from a world of woes,
Reunion seek with it, or those?

Alone with God, where no wind blows,
And Death, his shadow—doomed, he goes:
That God is there the shadow shows.

Oh, shoreless Deep, where no wind blows!
And, thou, oh, Land which no one knows!
That God is All, His shadow shows.

Charles Kingsley

1819–1875

THE DAY OF THE LORD

The Day of the Lord is at hand, at hand:
Its storms roll up the sky:
The nations sleep starving on heaps of gold;
All dreamers toss and sigh;
The night is darkest before the morn;
When the pain is sorest the child is born,
And the Day of the Lord at hand.

Gather you, gather you, angels of God—
Freedom, and Mercy, and Truth;
Come! for the Earth is grown coward and old,
Come down, and renew us her youth.

Wisdom, Self-Sacrifice, Daring, and Love,
Haste to the battle-field, stoop from above,
To the Day of the Lord at hand.

Gather you, gather you, hounds of hell—
Famine, and Plague, and War;
Idleness, Bigotry, Cant, and Misrule,
Gather, and fall in the snare!
Hireling and Mammonite, Bigot and Knave,
Crawl to the battle-field, sneak to your grave,
In the Day of the Lord at hand.

Who would sit down and sigh for a lost age of g
While the Lord of all ages is here?
True hearts will leap up at the trumpet of God,
And those who can suffer, can dare.
Each old age of gold was an iron age too,
And the meekest of saints may find stern work to
In the Day of the Lord at hand.

THE SANDS OF DEE

(From *Alton Locke*, 1849)

"O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee;"
The western wind was wild and dank with foam,
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.
The rolling mist came down and hid the land:
And never home came she.

"Oh! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress of golden hair,
A drownèd maiden's hair
Above the nets at sea?
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair
Among the stakes on Dee."

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel crawling foam,
The cruel hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea:
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee.

CLEAR AND COOL

(Song from *The Water Babies*, 1863)

Clear and cool, clear and cool,
By laughing shallow, and dreaming pool;
Cool and clear, cool and clear,
By shining shingle, and foaming wear;
Under the crag where the ouzel sings,
And the ivied wall where the church-bell rings,
Undefiled, for the undefiled;
Play by me, bathe in me, mother and child.

Dank and foul, dank and foul,
By the smoky town in its murky cowl;
Foul and dank, foul and dank,
By wharf and sewer and slimy bank;
Darker and darker the further I go,
Baser and baser the richer I grow;
Who dare sport with the sin-defiled?
Shrink *from me, turn* from me, mother and child.

Strong and free, strong and free;
The floodgates are open, away to the sea.
Free and strong, free and strong,
Cleansing my streams as I hurry along
To the golden sands, and the leaping bar,
And the taintless tide that awaits me afar,
As I lose myself in the infinite main,
Like a soul that has sinned and is pardoned ag
Undefiled, for the undefiled;
Play by me, bathe in me, mother and child.

William Barnes

1801–1886

EVENÈN IN THE VILLAGE

(From *Poems of Rural Life*, 1844)

Now the light o' the west is a-turn'd to glooı
An' the men be at hwome vrom ground;
An' the bells be a-zendèn all down the Coomb
From tower, their mwoansome sound.
An' the wind is still,
An' the house-dogs do bark,
An' the rooks be a-vled to the ellms high an' d
An' the water do roar at mill.

An' the flickerèn light drough the window-pei
Vrom the candle's dull fleäme do shoot,
An' young Jemmy the smith is a-gone down le
A-playèn his shrill-vaïced flute.
An' the miller's man
Do zit down at his ease
On the seat that is under the cluster o' trees,
Wi' his pipe an' his cider can.

Robert Stephen Hawker

1803–1875

THE SONG OF THE WESTERN MEN

(Written in 1852)

A good sword and a trusty hand!
A merry heart and true!
King James's men shall understand
What Cornish lads can do!

And have they fixed the where and when?
And shall Trelawny die?
Here's twenty thousand Cornish men
Will know the reason why!

Out spake their Captain brave and bold:
A merry wight was he:—
"If London Tower were Michael's hold,
We'd set Trelawny free!

"We'll cross the Tamar, land to land:
The Severn is no stay:
With 'one and all,' and hand in hand;
And who shall bid us nay?

"And when we come to London Wall,
A pleasant sight to view,
Come forth! come forth! ye cowards all:
Here's men as good as you.

"Trelawny he's in keep and hold:
Trelawny he may die:
But here's twenty thousand Cornish bold
Will know the reason why!"

Edward Fitzgerald

1809–1883

(From his translation of *The Rubaiyat*, 1859)

VII.

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:
  The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.

VIII.

Whether at Naishápúr or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
  The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

IX.

Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you say;
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yesterday?
  And this first Summer month that brings the
Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobád away.

X.

Well, let it take them! What have we to do
With Kaikobád the Great, or Kaikhosrú?
  Let Zál and Rustum thunder as they will,
Or Hátim call to Supper—heed not you.

. . . . . .

XII.

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

XIII.

Some for the Glories of This World; and some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum.

. . . . . .

XVII.

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his destin'd Hour, and went his way.

. . . . . .

XXI.

Ah, my Beloved, fill the cup that clears
To-Day of past Regret and future Fears:
To-morrow!—Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years.

. . . . . .

XXIV.

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, *sans Song,* sans Singer, and—sans End!

Sir Francis Hastings Charles Doyle

1810–1888

THE PRIVATE OF THE BUFFS

(1866)

Last night, among his fellow roughs,
He jested, quaff'd, and swore:
A drunken private of the Buffs,
Who never look'd before.
To-day, beneath the foeman's frown,
He stands in Elgin's place,
Ambassador from Britain's crown,
And type of all her race.

Poor, reckless, rude, low-born, untaught,
Bewilder'd, and alone,
A heart, with English instinct fraught,
He yet can call his own.
Ay, tear his body limb from limb,
Bring cord, or axe, or flame:
He only knows, that not through him
Shall England come to shame.

Far Kentish hop-fields round him seem'd,
Like dreams, to come and go;
Bright leagues of cherry-blossom gleam'd,
One sheet of living snow;
The smoke, above his father's door,
In gray soft eddyings hung:
Must he then watch it rise no more,
Doom'd by himself, so young?

Yes, honour calls!—with strength like steel
He put the vision by.
Let dusky Indians whine and kneel;
An English lad must die.
And thus, with eyes that would not shrink,
With knee to man unbent,
Unfaltering on its dreadful brink,
To his red grave he went.

Vain, mightiest fleets, of iron fram'd;
Vain, those all-shattering guns;
Unless proud England keep, untam'd,
The strong heart of her sons.
So, let his name through Europe ring—
A man of mean estate,
Who died, as firm as Sparta's king,
Because his soul was great.

William Makepeace Thackeray

1811–1863

AT THE CHURCH GATE

(From *Pendennis*, 1849-1850)

Although I enter not,
Yet round about the spot
Ofttimes I hover:
And near the sacred gate,
With longing eyes I wait,
Expectant of her.

The Minster bell tolls out
Above the city's rout,
And noise and humming:
They've hush'd the Minster bell:
The organ 'gins to swell:
She's coming, she's coming!

My lady comes at last,
Timid, and stepping fast,
And hastening hither,
With modest eyes downcast:
She comes—she's here—she's past—
May heaven go with her!

Kneel, undisturb'd, fair Saint!
Pour out your praise or plaint
Meekly and duly;
I will not enter there,
To sully your pure prayer
With thoughts unruly.

But suffer me to pace
Round the forbidden place,
Lingering a minute
Like outcast spirits who wait
And see through heaven's gate
Angels within it.

THE END OF THE PLAY

(From *Dr. Birch and His Young Friends*, 1848-184[illegible]

The play is done; the curtain drops,
Slow falling to the prompter's bell:
A moment yet the actor stops,
And looks around, to say farewell.
It is an irksome word and task;
And, when he's laughed and said his sa[illegible]
He shows, as he removes the mask,
A face that's anything but gay.

One word, ere yet the evening ends,
Let's close it with a parting rhyme,
And pledge a hand to all young friends,
As fits the merry Christmas time.
On life's wide scene you, too, have parts,
That Fate ere long shall bid you play;
Good night! with honest gentle hearts
A kindly greeting go alway!

Good night!—I'd say, the griefs, the joys,
Just hinted in this mimic page,
The triumphs and defeats of boys,
Are but repeated in our age.
I'd say, your woes were not less keen,
Your hopes more vain, than those of men;
Your pangs or pleasures of fifteen
At forty-five played o'er again.

I'd say, we suffer and we strive,
Not less nor more as men than boys;
With grizzled beards at forty-five,
As erst at twelve in corduroys.
And if, in time of sacred youth,
We learned at home to love and pray,
Pray Heaven that early Love and Truth
May never wholly pass away.

And in the world, as in the school,
I'd say, how fate may change and shift;
The prize be sometimes with the fool,
The race not always to the swift.
The strong may yield, the good may fall,
The great man be a vulgar clown,
The knave be *lifted* over all,
The kind cast pitilessly down.

Who knows the inscrutable design?
Blessed be He who took and gave!
Why should your mother, Charles, no
Be weeping at her darling's grave?
We bow to Heaven that will'd it so,
That darkly rules the fate of all,
That sends the respite or the blow,
That's free to give, or to recall.

This crowns his feast with wine and
Who brought him to that mirth and
His betters, see, below him sit,
Or hunger hopeless at the gate.
Who bade the mud from Dives' wheel
To spurn the rags of Lazarus?
Come, brother, in that dust we'll knee
Confessing Heaven that ruled it th

So each shall mourn, in life's advance,
Dear hopes, dear friends, untimely k
Shall grieve for many a forfeit chance
And longing passion unfulfilled.
Amen! whatever fate be sent,
Pray God the heart may kindly glo
Although the head with cares be bent
And whitened with the winter snow

Come wealth or want, come good or i
Let young and old accept their part,
And bow before the Awful Will,
And bear it with an honest heart,
Who misses or who wins the prize.
Go, lose or conquer as you can;
But if you fail, or if you rise,
Be each, pray God, a gentleman.

A gentleman, or old or young!
(Bear kindly with my humble lays);
The sacred chorus first was sung
Upon the first of Christmas days:
The shepherds heard it overhead—
The joyful angels raised it then:
Glory to Heaven on high, it said,
And peace on earth to gentle men.

My song, save this, is little worth;
I lay the weary pen aside,
And wish you health, and love, and mirth,
As fits the solemn Christmas-tide.
As fits the holy Christmas birth,
Be this, good friends, our carol still—
Be peace on earth, be peace on earth,
To men of gentle will.

Coventry Kersey Dighton Patmore

1823–1896

THE TOYS

My little Son, who look'd from thoughtful eyes
And moved and spoke in quiet grown-up wise,
Having my law the seventh time disobey'd,
I struck him, and dismiss'd
With hard words and unkiss'd,
His Mother, who was patient, being dead.
Then, fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,
I visited his bed,
But found him slumbering deep,
With darken'd eyelids, and their lashes yet
From his late sobbing wet.
And I, with moan,
Kissing away his tears, left others of my own;

For, on a table drawn beside his head,
He had put, within his reach,
A box of counters and a red-vein'd stone,
A piece of glass abraded by the beach
And six or seven shells,
A bottle with bluebells
And two French copper coins, ranged there with ca
ful art,
To comfort his sad heart.
So when that night I pray'd
To God, I wept, and said:
Ah, when at last we lie with trancèd breath,
Not vexing Thee in death,
And Thou rememberest of what toys
We made our joys,
How weakly understood,
Thy great commanded good,
Then, fatherly not less
Than I whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,
Thou'lt leave Thy wrath, and say,
"I will be sorry for their childishness."

THE TWO DESERTS

Not greatly moved with awe am I
To learn that we may spy
Five thousand firmaments beyond our own.
The best that's known
Of the heavenly bodies does them credit small.
View'd close, the Moon's fair ball
Is of ill objects worst,
A corpse in Night's highway, naked, fire
accurst;
they tell

So, judging from these two,
As we must do,
The Universe, outside our living Earth,
Was all conceiv'd in the Creator's mirth,
Forecasting at the time Man's spirit deep,
To make dirt cheap.
Put by the Telescope!
Better without it man may see,
Stretch'd awful in the hush'd midnight,
The ghost of his eternity.
Give me the nobler glass that swells to the eye
The things which near us lie,
Till Science rapturously hails,
In the minutest water-drop,
A torment of innumerable tails.
These at the least do live.
But rather give
A mind not much to pry
Beyond our royal-fair estate
Betwixt these deserts blank of small and great.
Wonder and beauty our own courtiers are,
Pressing to catch our gaze,
And out of obvious ways
Ne'er wandering far.

Sydney Thompson Dobell

1824–1874

KEITH OF RAVELSTON

(From *A Nuptial Eve*)

The murmur of the mourning ghost
That keeps the shadowy kine,
"Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!"

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The merry path that leads
Down the golden morning hill,
And thro' the silver meads;

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The stile beneath the tree,
The maid that kept her mother's kine,
The song that sang she!

She sang her song, she kept her kine,
She sat beneath the thorn
When Andrew Keith of Ravelston
Rode thro' the Monday morn;

His henchmen sing, his hawk-bells ring,
His belted jewels shine!
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

Year after year, where Andrew came,
Comes evening down the glade,
And still there sits a moonshine ghost
Where sat the sunshine maid.

Her misty hair is faint and fair,
She keeps the shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

I lay my hand upon the stile,
The stile is lone and cold,
The burnie that goes babbling by
Says nought that can be told.

Yet, stranger! here, from year to year,
She keeps her shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

Step out three steps, where Andrew stood—
Why blanch thy cheeks for fear?
The ancient stile is not alone,
'Tis not the burn I hear!

She makes her immemorial moan,
She keeps her shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

AMERICA

(*Poetical Works*, 1875)

Nor force nor fraud shall sunder us! O ye
Who north or south, on east or western land,
Native to noble sounds, say truth for truth,
Freedom for freedom, love for love, and God
For God; O ye who in eternal youth
Speak with a living and creative flood
This universal English, and do stand
Its breathing book; live worthy of that grand
Heroic utterance—parted, yet a whole,
Far yet unsever'd,—children brave and free
Of the great Mother-tongue, and ye shall be
Lords of an empire wide as Shakespeare's soul,
Sublime as Milton's immemorial theme,
And rich as Chaucer's speech, and fair as Spenser's
dream.

William Allingham

1824-1889

HOMEWARD BOUND

(From *Flower Pieces and Other Poems*, 1888)

I.

Head the ship for England!
  Shake out every sail!
Blithe leap the billows,
  Merry sings the gale.
Captain, work the reck'ning;
  How many knots a day?—
Round the world and home again,
  That's the sailor's way!

II.

We've traded with the Yankees,
  Brazilians, and Chinese;
We've laughed with dusky beauties
  In shade of tall palm-trees;
Across the line and Gulf-Stream—
  Round by Table Bay—
Everywhere and home again,
  That's the sailor's way!

III.

Nightly stands the North Star
  Higher on our bow;
Straight we run for England,
  Our thoughts are in it now.

Jolly time with friends ashore,
When we've drawn our pay!—
All about and home again,
That's the sailor's way!

IV.

Tom will to his parents,
Jack will to his dear,
Joe to wife and children,
Bob to pipes and beer;
Dicky to the dancing-room,
To hear the fiddles play;—
Round the world and home again,
That's the sailor's way!
Round the world and home again,
That's the sailor's way!

FOUR DUCKS ON A POND

(From the same)

Four ducks on a pond,
A grass-bank beyond,
A blue sky of spring,
White clouds on the wing;
What a little thing
To remember for years—
To remember with tears!

HEATHER

(From the same)

st barren hills and moors, cliffs over lakes,
reat headlands by the sea—a lonely land!
Vith Fishers' huts beside a yellow strand
ere wave on wave in foam and thunder breaks,

Or else a tranquil blue horizon takes
  Sunlight and shadow. Few can understand
  The poor folk's ancient tongue, sweet, simple, gra
Wherein a dreamy old-world half awakes.

And on these hills a thousand years ago
  Their fathers wander'd, sun and stars for clock,
With minds to wing above and creep below;
  Heard what we hear, the ocean's solemn shock,—
Saw what we see, this Heather-flow'r aglow,
  Empurpling league-long slope and crested rock.

HALF-WAKING

(From the same)

I thought it was the little bed
  I slept in long ago;
A straight white curtain at the head,
  And two smooth knobs below.

I thought I saw the nursery fire,
  And in a chair well-known
My mother sat, and did not tire
  With reading all alone.

If I should make the slightest sound
  To show that I'm awake,
She'd rise, and lap the blankets round,
  My pillow softly shake;

Kiss me, and turn my face to see
  The shadows on the wall,
And then sing *Rousseau's Dream* to me,
  Till fast asleep I fall.

But this is not my little bed;
That time is far away;
With strangers now I live instead,
From dreary day to day.

George Meredith

1828–1909

JUGGLING JERRY

(From *Modern Love and Poems of the English Roadside*, 1862)

I.

Pitch here the tent, while the old horse grazes:
By the old hedge-side we'll halt a stage.
It's nigh my last above the daisies:
My next leaf'll be man's blank page.
Yes, my old girl! and it's no use crying:
Juggler, constable, king, must bow.
One that outjuggles all's been spying
Long to have me, and he has me now.

II.

We've travelled times to this old common:
Often we've hung our pots in the gorse.
We've had a stirring life, old woman!
You, and I, and the old grey horse.
Races, and fairs, and royal occasions,
Found us coming to their call:
Now they'll miss us at our stations:
There's a Juggler outjuggles all!

III.

Up goes the lark, as if all were jolly!
Over the duck-pond the willow shakes.
Easy to think that grieving's folly,
When the hand's firm as driven stakes!
Ay, when we're strong, and braced, and manful,
Life's a sweet fiddle: but we're a batch
Born to become the Great Juggler's han'ful:
Balls he shies up, and is safe to catch.

IV.

Here's where the lads of the village cricket:
I was a lad not wide from here:
Couldn't I whip off the bale from the wicket?
Like an old world those days appear!
Donkey, sheep, geese, and thatched ale-house—I know them!
They are old friends of my halts, and seem,
Somehow, as if kind thanks I owe them:
Juggling don't hinder the heart's esteem.

V.

Juggling's no sin, for we must have victual:
Nature allows us to bait for the fool.
Holding one's own makes us juggle no little;
But, to increase it, hard juggling's the rule.
You that are sneering at my profession,
Haven't you juggled a vast amount?
There's the Prime Minister, in one Session,
Juggles more games than my sins'll count.

VI.

I've murdered insects with mock thunder:
Conscience, for that, in men don't quail.
I've made bread from the bump of wonder:
That's my business, and there's my tale.
Fashion and rank all praised the professor:
Ay! and I've had my smile from the Queen:
Bravo, Jerry! she meant: God bless her!
Ain't this a sermon on that scene?

VII.

I've studied men from my topsy-turvy
Close, and, I reckon, rather true.
Some are fine fellows: some, right scurvy:
Most, a dash between the two.
But it's a woman, old girl, that makes me
Think more kindly of the race:
And it's a woman, old girl, that shakes me
When the Great Juggler I must face.

VIII.

We two were married, due and legal:
Honest we've lived since we've been one.
Lord! I could then jump like an eagle:
You danced bright as a bit o' the sun.
Birds in a May-bush we were! right merry!
All night we kiss'd, we juggled all day.
Joy was the heart of Juggling Jerry!
Now from his old girl he's juggled away.

IX.

It's past parsons to console us:
No, nor no doctor fetch for me:
I can die without my bolus;
Two of a trade, lass, never agree!
Parson and Doctor!—don't they love rarely,
Fighting the devil in other men's fields!
Stand up yourself and match him fairly:
Then see how the rascal yields!

X.

I, lass, have lived no gypsy, flaunting
Finery while his poor helpmate grubs:
Coin I've stored, and you won't be wanting:
You sha'n't beg from the troughs and tubs.
Nobly you've stuck to me, though in his kitchen
Many a Marquis would hail you Cook!
Palaces you could have ruled and grown rich in,
But your old Jerry you never forsook.

XI.

Hand up the chirper! ripe ale winks in it;
Let's have comfort and be at peace.
Once a stout draught made me light as a linnet.
Cheer up! the Lord must have his lease.
May be—for none see in that black hollow—
It's just a place where we're held in pawn,
And, when the Great Juggler makes as to swallow,
It's just the sword trick—I ain't quite gone!

XII.

ıder came smells of the gorse, so nutty,
lold-like and warm: it's the prime of May.
ter than mortar, brick and putty,
s God's house on a blowing day.
ın me more up the mound; now I feel it:
ll the old heath-smells! Ain't it strange?
ere's the world laughing, as if to conceal it,
3ut He's by us, juggling the change.

XIII.

nind it well, by the sea-beach lying,
)nce—it's long gone—when two gulls we beheld,
ich, as the moon got up, were flying
)own a big wave that sparked and swelled.
ack, went a gun: one fell: the second
Wheeled round him twice, and was off for new luck:
ere in the dark her white wing beckon'd:—
)rop me a kiss—I'm the bird dead-struck!

LUCIFER IN STARLIGHT

(From *Poems and Lyrics*, 1883)

a starred night Prince Lucifer uprose.
ed of his dark dominion swung the fiend
ove the rolling ball in cloud part screened,
ere sinners hugged their spectre of repose.
or prey to his hot fit of pride were those.
d now upon his western wing he leaned,
w his huge bulk o'er Afric's sands careened,
w the black planet shadowed Arctic snows.
aring *through wider* zones that pricked his scars
th memory of the old revolt from Awe,

He reached a middle height, and at the stars,
Which are the brain of heaven, he looked, and sank.
Around the ancient track marched, rank on rank,
The army of unalterable law.

LOVE IN THE VALLEY

(From the same)

Under yonder beech-tree single on the green-sward,
  Couched with her arms behind her golden head,
Knees and tresses folded to slip and ripple idly,
  Lies my young love sleeping in the shade.
Had I the heart to slide an arm beneath her,
  Press her parting lips as her waist I gather slow—
Waking in amazement she could not but embrace me—
  Then would she hold me and never let me go?

. . . . . .

Shy as the squirrel and wayward as the swallow,
  Swift as the swallow along the river's light
Circleting the surface to meet his mirrored winglets—
  Fleeter she seems in her stay than in her flight.
Shy as the squirrel that leaps among the pine-tops,
  Wayward as the swallow overhead at set of sun,
She whom I love is hard to catch and conquer,
  Hard, but O the glory of the winning were she won!

. . . . . .

Lovely are the curves of the white owl sweeping
  Wavy in the dusk lit by one large star.
Lone on the fir-branch, his rattle-note unvaried,
  Brooding o'er the gloom, spins the brown eve-jar.
Darker grows the valley, more and more forgetting:
  So were it with me if forgetting could be willed.
Tell the grassy hollow that holds the bubbling well-
    spring,
Tell it to forget the source that keeps it filled.

. . . . . .

Large and smoky red the sun's cold disk drops,
Clipped by naked hills, on violet shaded snow:
Eastward large and still lights up a bower of moonrise
Whence at her leisure steps the moon aglow.
Nightlong on black print-branches our beech-tree
Gazes in this whiteness: nightlong could I.
Here may life on death or death on life be painted.
Let me clasp her soul to know she cannot die!
. . . . . .
Could I find a place to be alone with heaven,
I would speak my heart out: heaven is my need.
Every woodland tree is flushing like the dogwood,
Flashing like the whitebeam, swaying like the reed
Flushing like the dogwood crimson in October;
Streaming like the flag-reed South-West blown;
Flashing as in gusts the sudden-lighted whitebeam:
All seem to know what is for heaven alone.

George Eliot

1819–1880

"O MAY I JOIN THE CHOIR INVISIBLE"

(1867)

Longum illud tempus, quum non ero, magis me movet, quam hoc exiguum.—Cicero, ad Att., XII. 18

O may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence: live
In pulses stirr'd to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And *with their mild* persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.

So to live is heaven:
To make undying music in the world,
Breathing as beauteous order that controls
With growing sway the growing life of man.
So we inherit that sweet purity
For which we struggled, fail'd, and agoniz'd
With widening retrospect that bred despair.
Rebellious flesh that would not be subdued,
A vicious parent shaming still its child,
Poor anxious penitence, is quick dissolv'd;
Its discords, quench'd by meeting harmonies,
Die in the large and charitable air.
And all our rarer, better, truer self,
That sobb'd religiously in yearning song,
That watch'd to ease the burthen of the world,
Laboriously tracing what must be,
And what may yet be better,—saw within
A worthier image for the sanctuary,
And shap'd it forth before the multitude,
Divinely human, raising worship so
To higher reverence more mix'd with love,—
That better self shall live till human Time
Shall fold its eyelids, and the human sky
Be gather'd like a scroll within the tomb,
Unread forever.

This is life to come,
Which martyr'd men have made more glorious
For us who strive to follow. May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty,
Be the sweet presence of a good diffus'd,
And in diffusion ever more intense!
So shall I join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

Alfred Austin

1835–

LONGING

(From *Soliloquies in Song*, 1882)

I.

The hill slopes down to the valley, the stream runs
down to the sea,
And my heart, my heart, O far one! sets and strains
towards thee.
But only the feet of the mountain are felt by the rim
of the plain,
And the source and soul of the hurrying stream reach
not the calling main.

II.

The dawn is sick for the daylight, the morning yearns
for the noon,
And the twilight sighs for the evening star and the
rising of the moon.
But the dawn and the daylight never were seen in the
self-same skies,
And the gloaming dies of its own desire when the moon
and the stars arise.

III.

The Springtime calls to the Summer, "Oh, mingle
your life with mine,"
And Summer to Autumn 'plaineth low, "Must the
harvest be only thine?"
But the daffodil dies when the swallow comes, ere the
leaf is the blossom fled;
And when Autumn sits on her golden sheaves, then the
reign of the rose is dead.

IV.

And hunger and thirst, and wail and want, are lost in the empty air,
And the heavenly spirit vainly pines for the touch of the earthly fair.
And the hill slopes down to the valley, the stream runs down to the sea,
And my heart, my heart, O far one! sets and strains towards thee.

SONNETS

WRITTEN IN MID-CHANNEL

(From the same)

I.

Now upon English soil I soon shall stand,
Homeward from climes that fancy deems more fair;
And well I know that there will greet me there
No soft foam fawning upon smiling strand,
No scent of orange-groves, no zephyrs bland,
But Amazonian March, with breast half bare
And sleety arrows whistling through the air,
Will be my welcome from that burly land.
Yet he who boasts his birthplace yonder lies,
Owns in his heart a mood akin to scorn
For sensuous slopes that bask 'neath Southern skies
Teeming with wine and prodigal of corn,
And, gazing through the mist with misty eyes,
Blesses the brave bleak land where he was born.

II.

And wherefore feels he thus? Because its shore
Nor conqueror's foot despot's may defile,

Freedom walks unarmed about the isle,
Peace sits musing beside each man's door.
nd these straits, the wild-beast mob may roar,
vhere the veering demagogue beguile:
ıand in hand with the Past, look on and smile,
tread the ways our fathers trod before.
t though some wretch, whose glory you may trace
lonely hearths and unrecorded graves,
ıd his Sword-sceptre summoning swarms of slaves,
ace *our* shores with conflict or disgrace,—
augh behind the bulwark of the waves,
fling the foam defiant in his face.

Matthew Arnold

1822–1888

TO MARGUERITE

(From *Switzerland*, 1857)

Yes! in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live *alone*.
The islands feel the enclasping flow,
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their hollows lights,
And they are swept by balms of spring,
And in their glens on starry nights,
The nightingales divinely sing;
And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
Across the sounds and channels pour—

Oh! then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent;
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent!
Now round us spreads the watery plain—
Oh, might our marges meet again!

Who order'd, that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cool'd?
Who renders vain their deep desire?—
A God, a God their severance ruled!
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea.

ABSENCE

In this fair stranger's eyes of grey
Thine eyes, my love! I see.
I shiver; for the passing day
Had borne me far from thee.

This is the curse of life! that not
A nobler, calmer train
Of wiser thoughts and feelings blot
Our passions from our brain;

But each day brings its petty dust
Our soon-choked souls to fill,
And we forget because we must
And not because we will.

I struggle towards the light; and ye,
Once-long'd-for storms of love!
If with the light ye cannot be,
I bear that ye remove.

I struggle towards the light—but oh,
While yet the night is chill,
Upon time's barren, stormy flow,
Stay with me, Marguerite, still!

SELF-DEPENDENCE

(From *Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems*, 1852)

ıry of myself, and sick of asking
ıt I am, and what I ought to be,
this vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
ıwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

a look of passionate desire
the sea and to the stars I send:
: who from my childhood up have calm'd me,
n me, ah, compose me to the end!

ı, once more," I cried, "ye stars, ye waters,
my heart your mighty charm renew;
, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
my soul becoming vast like you!"

n the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven,
r the lit sea's unquiet way,
he rustling night-air came the answer:
ouldst thou *be* as these are? *Live* as they.

ıaffrighted by the silence round them,
istracted by the sights they see,
se demand not that the things without them
d them love, amusement, sympathy.

ıd with joy the stars perform their shining,
l the sea its long moon-silver'd roll;
self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
he fever of some differing soul.

"Bounded by themselves, and unregardful
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see."

O air-born voice! long since, severely clear,
A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear:
"Resolve to be thyself; and know, that he
Who finds himself, loses his misery!"

DOVER BEACH

(From *New Poems*, 1867)

The sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits;—on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd sand,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

SHAKSPEARE

(From *The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems*, 1849)

Others abide our question. Thou art free.
We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill,
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,

Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,
Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foil'd searching of mortality;
And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honour'd, self-secure,
Didst tread on earth unguess'd at.—Better so!

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow—
Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

WORLDLY PLACE

Even in a palace, life may be led well!
So spoke the imperial sage, purest of men,
Marcus Aurelius.—But the stifling den
Of common life, where, crowded up pell-mell,
Our freedom for a little bread we sell,
And drudge under some foolish master's ken,
Who rates us, if we peer outside our pen—
Match'd with a palace, is not this a hell?
Even in a palace! On his truth sincere,
Who spoke these words, no shadow ever came;
And when my ill-school'd spirit is aflame
Some nobler, ampler stage of life to win,
I'll stop, and say: "There were no succour here—
The aids to noble life are all within."

EAST LONDON

'Twas August, and the fierce sun overhead
Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal Green,
And the pale weaver, through his windows seen
In Spitalfields, look'd thrice dispirited;
I met a preacher there I knew, and said:
"Ill and o'erworked, how fare you in this scene?"
"Bravely!" said he; "for I of late have been
Much cheer'd with thoughts of Christ, *the living bread*.
O human soul! as long as thou canst so
Set up a mark of everlasting light,
Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,
To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou roam,
Not with lost toil thou labourest through the night!
Thou mak'st the heaven thou hop'st, indeed thy home.

GEIST'S GRAVE

(January, 1881)

Four years!—and didst thou stay above
The ground, which hides thee now, but four?
And all that life, and all that love,
Were crowded, Geist! into no more?

Only four years those winning ways,
Which make me for thy presence yearn,
Call'd us to pet thee or to praise,
Dear little friend! at every turn?

That loving heart, that patient soul,
Had they indeed no longer span,
To run their course, and reach their goal,
And read their homily to man?

That liquid, melancholy eye,
From whose pathetic, soul-fed springs
Seem'd surging the Virgilian cry,
The sense of tears in mortal things—

That steadfast, mournful strain, consoled
By spirits gloriously gay,
And temper of heroic mould—
What, was four years their whole short day?

Yes, only four!—and not the course
Of all the centuries yet to come,
And *not the infinite* resource
Of nature, with her countless sum

Of figures, with her fulness vast
Of new creation evermore,
Can ever quite repeat the past,
Or just thy little self restore.

Stern law of every mortal lot!
Which man, proud man, finds hard to bear,
And builds himself I know not what
Of second life I know not where.

But thou, when struck thine hour to go,
On us, who stood despondent by,
A meek last glance of love didst throw,
And humbly lay thee down to die.

Yet would we keep thee in our heart—
Would fix our favourite on the scene,
Nor let thee utterly depart
And be as if thou ne'er hadst been.

And so there rise these lines of verse
On lips that rarely form them now;
While to each other we rehearse:
Such ways, such arts, such looks hadst thou!

We stroke thy broad brown paws again,
We bid thee to thy vacant chair,
We greet thee by the window-pane,
We hear thy scuffle on the stair;

We see the flaps of thy large ears
Quick raised to ask which way we go;
Crossing the frozen lake, appears
Thy small black figure on the snow!

Nor to us only art thou dear
Who mourn thee in thine English home;
Thou hast thine absent master's tear,
Dropt by the far Australian foam.

Thy memory lasts both here and there,
And thou shalt live as long as we.
And after that—thou dost not care!
In us was all the world to thee.

Yet, fondly zealous for thy fame,
Even to a date beyond our own
We strive to carry down thy name,
By mounded turf, and graven stone.

We lay thee, close within our reach,
Here, where the grass is smooth and warm,
Between the holly and the beech,
Where oft we watch'd thy couchant form,

Asleep, yet lending half an ear
To travellers on the Portsmouth road;—
There choose we thee, O guardian dear,
Mark'd with a stone, thy last abode!

Then some, who through this garden pass,
When we too, like thyself, are clay,
Shall see thy grave upon the grass,
And stop before the stone, and say:

People who lived here long ago
Did by this stone, it seems, intend
To name for future times to know
The dachs-hound, Geist, their little friend.

LINES WRITTEN IN KENSINGTON GARDI

(From *Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems*, 185

In this lone, open glade I lie,
Screen'd by deep boughs on either hand;
And at its end, to stay the eye,
Those black-crown'd, red-boled pine-trees

Birds here make song, each bird has his,
Across the girdling city's hum.
How green under the boughs it is!
How thick the tremulous sheep-cries com

Sometimes a child will cross the glade
To take his nurse his broken toy;
Sometimes a thrush flit overhead
Deep in her unknown day's employ.

Here at my feet what wonders pass,
What endless, active life is here!
What blowing daisies, fragrant grass!
An air-stirr'd forest, fresh and clear.

Scarce fresher is the mountain-sod
Where the tired angler lies, stretch'd out,
And, eased of basket and of rod,
Counts his day's spoil, the spotted trout.

In the huge world, which roars hard by,
Be others happy if they can!
But in my helpless cradle I
Was breathed on by the rural Pan.

I on men's impious uproar hurl'd,
Think often, as I hear them rave,
That peace has left the upper world
And now keeps only in the grave.

Yet here is peace for ever new!
When I who watch them am away,
Still all things in this glade go through
The changes of their quiet day.

Then to their happy rest they pass!
The flowers upclose, the birds are fed,
The night comes down upon the grass,
The child sleeps warmly in his bed.

Calm soul of all things! make it mine
To feel, amid the city's jar,
That there abides a peace of thine
Man did not make, and cannot mar.

The will to neither strive nor cry,
The power to feel with others give!
Calm, calm me more! nor let me die,
Before I have begun to live.

Arthur Hugh Clough

1819–1861

QUA CURSUM VENTUS

(From *Ambarvalia*, 1843)

As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay
With canvas drooping, side by side,
Two towers of sail at dawn of day
Are scarce long leagues apart descried;

When fell the night, upsprung the breeze,
And all the darkling hours they plied,
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas
By each was cleaving, side by side:

E'en so—but why the tale reveal
Of those, whom year by year unchanged,
Brief absence joined anew to feel,
Astounded, soul from soul estranged?

At dead of night their sails were filled,
And onward each rejoicing steered—
Ah, neither blame, for neither willed,
Or wist, what first with dawn appeared.

To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,
Brave barks! In light, in darkness too,
Through winds and tides one compass guides—
To that, and your own selves, be true.

But O blithe breeze! and O great seas,
Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,
On your wide plain they join again,
Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought,
One purpose hold where'er they fare,—
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!
At last, at last, unite them there.

"WITH WHOM IS NO VARIABLENESS, NEI
SHADOW OF TURNING"

(From the same)

ʏ NOT, THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH

(From the same)

Say not, the struggle nought availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
Where daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

THE STREAM OF LIFE

(From the same)

O stream descending to the sea,
Thy mossy banks between,
The flow'rets blow, the grasses grow,
The leafy trees are green.

In garden plots the children play,
The fields the labourers till,
And houses stand on either hand,
And thou descendest still.

O life descending unto death,
Our waking eyes behold,
Parent and friend thy lapse attend,
Companions young and old.

Strong purposes our minds possess,
Our hearts affections fill,
We toil and earn, we seek and learn,
And thou descendest still.

O end to which our currents tend,
Inevitable sea,
To which we flow, what do we know,
What shall we guess of thee?

A roar we hear upon thy shore,
As we our course fulfil;
Scarce we divine a sun will shine
And be above us still.

James Thomson

1834–1882

(From *Sunday up the River*, written 1865)

Give a man a horse he can ride,
Give a man a boat he can sail;
And his rank and wealth, his strength and hea
On sea nor shore shall fail.

Give a man a pipe he can smoke,
Give a man a book he can read;
And his home is bright with a calm delight,
Though the rooms be poor indeed.

Give a man a girl he can love,
As I, O my Love, love thee;
And his hand is great with the pulse of Fate,
At home, on land, on sea.

From *Sunday at Hampstead*, written 1863–1865)

O mellow moonlight warm,
Weave round my Love a charm;
O countless, starry eyes
Watch from the holy skies;
O ever-solemn night,
Shield her within thy might:
  Watch her, my little one!
  Shield her, my darling!

How my heart shrinks with fear,
Nightly to leave thee, dear;
Lovely and pure within,
Vast glooms of woe and sin:
Our wealth of love and bliss
Too heavenly-perfect is:
  Good-night, my little one!
  God keep thee, darling!

Frederic William Henry Myers

1843–1901

THE INNER LIGHT

(From *Saint Paul*, 1867)

if some pen should write upon your rafter
ENE and MENE in the folds of flame,
ık you could any memories thereafter
'holly retrace the couplet as it came?

if some strange intelligible thunder
ang to the earth the secret of a star,
ree could ye catch, for terror and for wonder,
ireds of the story that was peal'd so far.

Scarcely I catch the words of His revealing,
Hardly I hear Him, dimly understand,
Only the Power that is within me pealing
Lives on my lips and beckons to my hand.

Whoso has felt the Spirit of the Highest
Cannot confound nor doubt Him nor deny:
Yea, with one voice, O world, though thou deni
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.

Rather the earth shall doubt when her retrieving
Pours in the rain and rushes from the sod,
Rather than he for whom the great conceiving
Stirs in his soul to quicken into God.

Ay, though thou then shouldst strike him fror
glory
Blind and tormented, madden'd and alone,
Even on the cross would he maintain his story,
Yes, and in hell would whisper, I have known.

Henry Austin Dobson

1840–

A GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL

(From *Old World Idylls*, 1883)

He lived in that past Georgian day,
When men were less inclined to say
That "Time is Gold," and overlay
With toil their pleasure;
He held some land, and dwelt thereon,—
Where, I forget,—the house is gone;
His Christian name, I think, was John,—
His surname, Leisure.

Reynolds has painted him,—a face
Filled with a fine, old-fashioned grace,
Fresh-coloured, frank, with ne'er a trace
Of trouble shaded;
The eyes are blue, the hair is drest
In plainest way,—one hand is prest
Deep in a flapped canary vest,
With buds brocaded.

He wears a brown old Brunswick coat,
With silver buttons,—round his throat,
A soft cravat;—in all you note
An elder fashion,—
A strangeness, which, to us who shine
In shapely hats,—whose coats combine
All harmonies of hue and line,—
Inspires compassion.

He lived so long ago, you see!
Men were untravelled then, but we,
Like Ariel, post o'er land and sea
With careless parting;
He found it quite enough for him
To smoke his pipe in "garden trim,"
And watch, about the fish tank's brim,
The swallows darting.

He liked the well-wheel's creaking tongue,—
He liked the thrush that stopped and sung,—
He liked the drone of flies among
His netted peaches;
He liked to watch the sunlight fall
Athwart his ivied orchard wall;
Or pause to catch the cuckoo's call
Beyond the beeches.

His were the times of Paint and Patch,
And yet no Ranelagh could match
The sober doves that round his thatch
Spread tails and sidled;
He liked their ruffling, puffed content,—
For him their drowsy wheelings meant
More than a Mall of Beaus that bent,
Or Belles that bridled.

Not that, in truth, when life began,
He shunned the flutter of the fan;
He too had maybe "pinked his man"
In Beauty's quarrel;
But now his "fervent youth" had flown
Where lost things go; and he was grown
As staid and slow-paced as his own
Old hunter, Sorrel.

Yet still he loved the chase, and held
That no composer's score excelled
The merry horn, when Sweetlip swelled
Its jovial riot;
But most his measured words of praise
Caressed the angler's easy ways,—
His idly meditative days,—
His rustic diet.

Not that his "meditating" rose
Beyond a sunny summer doze;
He never troubled his repose
With fruitless prying;
But held, as law for high and low,
What God withholds no man can know,
And smiled away inquiry so,
Without replying.

We read—alas, how much we read!
The jumbled strifes of creed and creed
With endless controversies feed
Our groaning tables;
His books—and they sufficed him—were
Cotton's "Montaigne," "The Grave" of Blair,
A "Walton"—much the worse for wear—
And "Æsop's Fables."

One more,—"The Bible." Not that he
Had searched its pages as deep as we;
No sophistries could make him see
Its slender credit;
It may be that he could not count
The sires and sons to Jesse's fount,—
He liked the "Sermon on the Mount,"—
And more, he read it.

Once he had loved, but failed to wed,
A red-cheeked lass who long was dead;
His ways were far too slow, he said,
To quite forget her;
And still when time had turned him gray,
The earliest hawthorn buds in May
Would find his lingering feet astray,
Where first he met her.

"*In Caelo Quies*" heads the stone
On Leisure's grave,—now little known,
A tangle of wild-rose has grown
So thick across it;
The "Benefactions" still declare
He left the clerk an elbow-chair,
And "12 Pence Yearly to Prepare
Christmas Posset."

Lie softly, Leisure! Doubtless you
With too serene a conscience drew
Your easy breath, and slumbered through
The gravest issue;
But we, to whom our age allows
Scarce space to wipe our weary brows,
Look down upon your narrow house,
Old friend, and miss you!

BEFORE SEDAN

(From *Vignettes in Rhyme*, 1873)

"The dead hand clasped a letter."
—SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Here in this leafy place
Quiet he lies,
Cold, with his sightless face
Turned to the skies;
'Tis but another dead;
All you can say is said.

Carry his body hence,—
Kings must have slaves;
Kings climb to eminence
Over men's graves:
So this man's eye is dim;—
Throw the earth over him.

What was the white you touched,
There, at his side?
Paper his hand had clutched
Tight ere he died;—
Message or wish, maybe;—
Smooth the folds out and see.

Hardly the worst of us
  Here could have smiled!—
Only the tremulous
  Words of a child;—
Prattle, that has for stops
Just a few ruddy drops.

Look. She is sad to miss,
  Morning and night,
His—her dead father's—kiss
  Tries to be bright,
Good to mamma, and sweet.
That is all. "Marguerite."

Ah, if beside the dead
  Slumbered the pain!
Ah, if the hearts that bled
  Slept with the slain!
If the grief died;—But no;—
Death will not have it so.

THE DYING OF TANNEGUY DU BOIS

(From the same)

En los nidos de antaño
No hay pájaros hogaño.
—SPANISH PROVERB.

Yea, I am passed away, I think, from this;
  Nor helps me herb, nor any leechcraft here,
But lift me hither the sweet cross to kiss,
  And witness ye, I go without a fear.
Yea, I am sped, and never more shall see,
  As once I dreamed, the show of shield and crest,
Yone *southward to the* fighting by the sea;—
There is no bird in any last year's nest!

Yea, with me now all dreams are done, I ween,
Grown faint and unremembered; voices call
High up, like misty warders dimly seen
Moving at morn on some Burgundian wall;
And all things swim—as when the charger stands
Quivering between the knees, and East and West
Are filled with flash of scarves and waving hands;—
There is no bird in any last year's nest!

Is she a dream I left in Aquitaine?—
My wife Giselle,—who never spoke a word,
Although I knew her mouth was drawn with pain,
Her eyelids hung with tears; and though I heard
The strong sob shake her throat, and saw the cord
Her necklace made about it;—she that prest
To watch me trotting till I reached the ford;—
There is no bird in any last year's nest!

Ah! I had hoped, God wot,—had longed that she
Should watch me from the little-lit tourelle,
Me, coming riding by the windy lea—
Me, coming back again to her, Giselle;
Yea, I had hoped once more to hear him call,
The curly-pate, who, rushen lance in rest,
Stormed at the lilies by the orchard wall;—
There is no bird in any last year's nest!

But how, my Masters, ye are wrapt in gloom!
This Death will come, and whom he loves he cleaves
Sheer through the steel and leather; hating whom
He smites in shameful wise behind the greaves.
'Tis a fair time with Dennis and the Saints,
And weary work to age, and want for rest,
When harness groweth heavy, and one faints,
With no bird left in any last year's nest!

re ye good hap, then, all. For me, I lie
Broken in Christ's sweet hand, with whom shall rest
keep me living, now that I must die;—
There is no bird in any last year's nest!

Arthur William Edgar O'Shaughnessy

1844–1881

ODE

(From *Music and Moonlight*, 1874)

We are the music makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams;—
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory:
One man, with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample a kingdom down.

We, in the ages lying
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
And Babel itself in our mirth;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the old of the new world's worth;
For each age is a dream that is dying,
Or one that is coming to birth.

A breath of our inspiration
Is the life of each generation;
  A wondrous thing of our dreaming
  Unearthly, impossible seeming—
The soldier, the king, and the peasant
  Are working together in one,
Till our dream shall become their present
  And their work in the world be done.

They had no vision amazing
Of the goodly house they are raising;
  They had no divine foreshowing
  Of the land to which they are going:
But on one man's soul it hath broken,
  A light that doth not depart;
And his look, or a word he hath spoken,
  Wrought flame in another man's heart.

And therefore to-day is thrilling
With a past day's late fulfilling;
  And the multitudes are enlisted
  In the faith that their fathers resisted,
And, scorning the dream of to-morrow,
  Are bringing to pass, as they may,
In the world, for its joys or its sorrow,
  The dream that was scorned yesterday.

But we, with our dreaming and singing,
  Ceaseless and sorrowless we!
The glory about us clinging
  Of the glorious futures we see,
Our souls with high music ringing:
  O men! it must ever be
That we dwell, in our dreaming and singing,
  A little apart from ye.

For we are afar with the dawning
And the suns that are not yet high,
And out of the infinite morning
Intrepid you hear us cry—
How, spite of your human scorning,
Once more God's future draws nigh,
And already goes forth the warning
That ye of the past must die.

Great hail! we cry to the comers
From the dazzling unknown shore;
Bring us hither your sun and your summers,
And renew our world as of yore;
You shall teach us your song's new numbers,
And things that we dreamed not before:
Yea, in spite of a dreamer who slumbers,
And a singer who sings no more.

Algernon Charles Swinburne

1837–1909

CHORUS

(From *Atalanta in Calydon*, 1865)

hen the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,
The mother of months in meadow or plain
lls the shadows and windy places
With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;
nd the brown bright nightingale amorous
half assuaged for Itylus,
or the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,
The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of quiv
  Maiden most perfect, lady of light,
With a noise of winds and many rivers,
  With a clamour of waters, and with might;
Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,
Over the splendour and speed of thy feet;
For the faint east quickens, the wan west shivers
  Round the feet of the day and the feet of the

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to her
  Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?
O that man's heart were as fire and could spring t
  Fire, or the strength of the streams that spring
For the stars and the winds are unto her
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;
For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,
  And the southwest-wind and the west-wind sin

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
  And all the season of snows and sins;
The days dividing lover and lover,
  The light that loses, the night that wins;
And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
  Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,
  Ripe grasses trammel a travelling foot,
The faint fresh flame of the young year flushes
  From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;
And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,
And the oat is heard above the lyre,
And the hoofèd heel of a satyr crushes
  *The chest*nut-husk at the chestnut-root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,
Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,
Follows with dancing and fills with delight
The Mænad and the Bassarid;
And soft as lips that laugh and hide
The laughing leaves of the tree divide,
And screen from seeing and leave in sight
The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair
Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;
The wild vine slipping down leaves bare
Her bright breast shortening into sighs;
The wild vine slips with the weight of its leaves,
But the berried ivy catches and cleaves
To the limbs that glitter, the feet that scare
The wolf that follows, the fawn that flies.

CHORUS

(From the same)

We have seen thee, O Love, thou art fair; thou art goodly, O Love;
Thy wings make light in the air as the wings of a dove.
Thy feet are as winds that divide the stream of the sea;
Earth is thy covering to hide thee, the garment of thee.
Thou art swift and subtle and blind as a flame of fire;
Before thee the laughter, behind thee the tears of desire;
And twain go forth beside thee, a man with a maid;
Her eyes are the eyes of a bride whom delight makes *afraid;*

As the breath in the buds that stir is her bridal breat
But Fate is the name of her; and his name is Deat

For an evil blossom was born
Of sea-foam and the frothing of blood,
Blood-red and bitter of fruit,
And the seed of it laughter and tear
And the leaves of it madness and scorn:
A bitter flower from the bud,
Sprung of the sea without root,
Sprung without graft from the years
. . . . . .

What hadst thou to do being born,
Mother, when winds were at ease,
As a flower of the springtime of corn,
A flower of the foam of the seas?
For bitter thou wast from thy birth,
Aphrodite, a mother of strife;
For before thee some rest was on earth,
A little respite from tears,
A little pleasure of life;
For life was not then as thou art,
But as one that waxeth in years
Sweet-spoken, a fruitful wife;
Earth had no thorn, and desire
No sting, neither death any dart;
What hadst thou to do amongst these,
Thou, clothed with a burning fire,
Thou, girt with sorrow of heart,
Thou, sprung of the seed of the seas
As an ear from a seed of corn,
As a brand plucked forth of a pyre,
As a ray shed forth of the morn,
For division of soul and disease,
For a dart and a sting and a thorn?
What ailed thee then to be born?

Was there not evil enough,
Mother, and anguish on earth
Born with a man at his birth,
Wastes underfoot, and above
Storm out of heaven, and dearth
Shaken down from the shining thereof,
Wrecks from afar overseas
And peril of shallow and firth,
And tears that spring and increase
In the barren places of mirth,
That thou, having wings as a dove,
Being girt with desire for a girth,
That thou must come after these,
That thou must lay on him love?

Thou shouldst not so have been born:
But death should have risen with thee,
Mother, and visible fear,
Grief, and the wringing of hands,
And noise of many that mourn;
The smitten bosom, the knee
Bowed, and in each man's ear
A cry as of perishing lands,
A moan as of people in prison,
A tumult of infinite griefs;
And thunder of storm on the sands,
And wailing of wives on the shore;
And under thee newly arisen
Loud shoals and shipwrecking reefs,
Fierce air and violent light;
Sail rent and sundering oar,
Darkness, and noises of night;
Clashing of streams in the sea,
Wave against wave as a sword,
Clamour of currents, and foam;
Rains making ruin on earth;

Winds that wax ravenous and roam
As wolves in a wolfish horde;
Fruits growing faint in the tree,
And blind things dead in their birth:
Famine, and blighting of corn,
When thy time was come to be born.

THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

(From *Laus Veneris*, 1866)

Here, where the world is quiet;
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest-time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
And men that laugh and weep;
Of what may come hereafter
For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers
And every thing but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbour,
And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labour,
Weak ships and spirits steer;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither;
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here

No growth of moor or coppice,
  No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
  Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes
Where no leaf blooms or blushes
Save this whereout she crushes
  For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
  In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
  All night till light is born;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
  Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
  He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
  Nor weep for pains in hell;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love reposes,
  In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
  Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
  With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To *men that* mix and meet her
  From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
  She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,
  The life of fruits and corn;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
  And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
  The old loves with wearier wings;
And all dead years draw thither,
  And all disastrous things;
Dead dreams of days forsaken,
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
  Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow
  And joy was never sure;
To-day will die to-morrow;
  Time stoops to no man's lure;
And love, grown faint and fretful,
With lips but half regretful
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
  Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
  From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
  Whatever gods may be
That no life lives forever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
  Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
Nor any change of light:
Nor sound of waters shaken,
Nor any sound or sight:
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal;
Only the sleep eternal
In an eternal night.

PASTICHE

(From *Poems and Ballads*, 1878)

Now the days are all gone over
Of our singing, love by lover,
Days of summer-coloured seas
Blown adrift through beam and breeze.

Now the nights are all past over
Of our dreaming, dreams that hover
In a mist of fair false things,
Nights afloat on wide wan wings.

Now the loves with faith for mother,
Now the fears with hope for brother,
Scarce are with us as strange words,
Notes from songs of last year's birds.

Now all good that comes or goes is
As the smell of last year's roses,
As the radiance in our eyes
Shot from summer's ere he dies.

Now the morning faintlier risen
Seems no god come forth of prison,
But a bird of plume plucked wing,
Pale with thought of evening.

Now hath hope, outraced in running,
Given the torch up of his cunning
And the palm he thought to wear
Even to his own strong child-despair.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

1828–1882

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

(Third Version, from *Poems*, 1870)

The blessed damozel leaned out
  From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
  Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
  And the stars in her hair were sev

Her robe ungirt from clasp to hem,
  No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
  For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
  Was yellow like ripe corn.

Herseemed she scarce had been a day
  One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
  From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
  Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face. . .
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And *the lilies* lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
  Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the world. Her gaze still strove
  Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
  The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
  Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
  She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
  Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
  Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be harkened? When those bells
  Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
  Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
  For he will come," she said.
"Have I not prayed in Heaven?—on earth,
  Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
  And shall I feel afraid?

"When round his head the aureole clings,
  And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
  To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
  And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His name audibly.

"And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know."

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

"We two," she said, "will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret and Rosalys.

"Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robes for them
Who are just born, being dead.

"He shall fear, haply, and be dumb:
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak:
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles:
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me:—
Only to live as once on earth
With Love,—only to be,
As then awhile, forever now
Together, I and he."

She gazed and listened and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild,—
"All this is when he comes." She ceased.
The light thrilled towards her, fill'd
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smil'd.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres:
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

THE SEA-LIMITS

(From the same)

Consider the sea's listless chime:
Time's self it is, made audible,—
The murmur of the earth's own shell.
Secret continuance sublime
Is the sea's end: our sight may pass
No furlong further. Since time was,
This sound hath told the lapse of time.

No quiet, which is death's,—it hath
The mournfulness of ancient life,
Enduring always at dull strife.
As the world's heart of rest and wrath,
Its painful pulse is in the sands.
Last utterly, the whole sky stands,
Gray and not known, along its path.

Listen alone beside the sea,
Listen alone among the woods;
Those voices of twin solitudes
Shall have one sound alike to thee:
Hark where the murmurs of thronged men
Surge and sink back and surge again,—
Still the one voice of wave and tree.

Gather a shell from the strown beach
And listen at its lips: they sigh
The same desire and mystery,
The echo of the whole sea's speech.
And all mankind is thus at heart
Not any thing but what thou art:
And Earth, Sea, Man, are all in each.

SONNETS

SIBYLLA PALMIFERA

(For a Picture)

Under the arch of Life, where love and death,
Terror and mystery, guard her shrine, I saw
Beauty enthroned; and though her gaze struck aw
I drew it in as simply as my breath.
Hers are the eyes which, over and beneath,
The sky and sea bend on thee,—which can draw,
By sea or sky or woman, to one law,
The allotted bondman of her palm and wreath.

This is that Lady Beauty, in whose praise
Thy voice and hand shake still,—long known to thee
By flying hair and fluttering hem,—the beat
Following her daily of thy heart and feet,
How passionately and irretrievably,
In what fond flight, how many ways and days!

SONNET XIX

SILENT NOON

(From *The House of Life*, in *Ballads and Sonnets*, 1881)

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass,—
The finger-points look through like rosy blooms:
Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms
'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.

All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,
Are golden kingcup-fields with silver edge
Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn-hedge
'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.

Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-fly
Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the sky:—
So this wing'd hour is dropt to us from above.
Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,
This close-companioned inarticulate hour
When twofold silence was the song of love.

SONNET LXIII

INCLUSIVENESS

The changing guests, each in a different mood,
Sit at the roadside table and arise:
And every life among them in likewise
Is a soul's board set daily with new food.
What man has bent o'er his son's sleep, to brood
How that face shall watch his when cold it lies?
Or thought, as his own mother kissed his eyes,
Of what her kiss was when his father wooed?

May not this ancient room thou sit'st in dwell
In separate living souls for joy or pain?
Nay, all its corners may be painted plain
Where Heaven shows pictures of some life spent well
And may be stamped, a memory all in vain,
Upon the sight of lidless eyes in Hell.

SONNET XCVII

A SUPERSCRIPTION

Look in my face; my name is Might-have-been;
I am also called No-more, Too-late, Farewell;
Unto thine ear I hold the dead-sea shell
Cast up thy Life's foam-fretted feet between;

Unto thine eyes the glass where that is seen
  Which had Life's form and Love's, but by my spell
  Is now a shaken shadow intolerable,
Of ultimate things unuttered the frail screen.

Mark me how still I am! But should there dart
  One moment through thy soul the soft surprise
  Of that winged Peace which lulls the breath of sighs,—
Then shalt thou see me smile, and turn apart
Thy visage to mine ambush at thy heart
  Sleepless with cold commemorative eyes.

Christina Georgina Rossetti

1830–1894

UP-HILL

(From *Goblin Market*, etc., 1862)

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?
  Yes, to the very end.
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
  From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?
  A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.
May not the darkness hide it from my face?
  You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
  Those who have gone before.
Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?
  They will not keep you standing at that door.

hall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
Of labour you shall find the sum.
Vill there be beds for me and all who seek?
Yea, beds for all who come.

SYMBOLS

(From *Devotional Pieces*)

watched a rosebud very long
Brought on by dew and sun and shower,
Waiting to see the perfect flower;
hen, when I thought it should be strong,
It opened at the matin hour
nd fell at even-song.

watched a nest from day to day,
A green nest full of pleasant shade,
Wherein three speckled eggs were laid:
ut when they should have hatched in May,
The two old birds had grown afraid
r tired, and flew away.

hen in my wrath I broke the bough
That I had tended so with care,
Hoping its scent should fill the air;
crushed the eggs, not heeding how
Their ancient promise had been fair:
would have vengeance now.

ut the dead branch spoke from the sod,
And the eggs answered me again:
Because we failed dost thou complain?
thy wrath just? And what if God,
Who waiteth for thy fruits in vain,
ould also take the rod?

(From *Monna Innominata*, in *A Pageant and Other Poems*, 1881)

"Amor che a nulla amato amar perdona."—DANTE.
"Amor m'addusse in sì gioiosa spene."—PETRARCA.

O my heart's heart, and you who are to me
More than myself myself, God be with you,
Keep you in strong obedience leal and true
To Him whose noble service setteth free,
Give you all good we see or can foresee,
Make your joys many and your sorrows few,
Bless you in what you bear and what you do,
Yea, perfect you as He would have you be.
So much for you; but what for me, dear friend?
To love you without stint and all I can
To-day, to-morrow, world without an end;
To love you much and yet to love you more,
As Jordan at his flood sweeps either shore;
Since woman is the helpmeet made for man.

(From the same)

"E la Sua Volontade è nostra pace."—DANTE.
"Sol con questi pensier, con altre chiome."—PETRARCA.

Youth gone, and beauty gone if ever there
Dwelt beauty in so poor a face as this;
Youth gone and beauty, what remains of bliss?
I will not bind fresh roses in my hair,
To shame a cheek at best but little fair,—
Leave youth his roses, who can bear a thorn,—
I will not seek for blossoms anywhere,
Except such common flowers as blow with corn.
Youth gone and beauty gone, what doth remain?
The longing of a heart pent up forlorn,
A silent heart whose silence loves and longs;
The silence of a heart which sang its songs
While youth and beauty made a summer morn,
Silence of love that cannot sing again.

(From *Later Life*, in the same)

u Who didst make and knowest whereof we
made,
h bear in mind our dust and nothingness,
ur wordless tearless dumbness of distress:
r Thou in mind the burden Thou hast laid
n us, and our feebleness unstayed
xcept Thou stay us: for the long long race
Vhich stretches far and far before our face
ou knowest,—remember Thou whereof we are made
making makes us Thine, then Thine we are;
nd if redemption, we are twice Thine own:
once Thou didst come down from heaven afar
To seek us and to find us, how not save?
Comfort us, save us, leave us not alone,
Thou Who didst die our death and fill our grave.

William Morris

1834–1896

AN APOLOGY

(From *The Earthly Paradise*, 1868–70)

f Heaven or Hell I have no power to sing,
not ease the burden of your fears,
ake quick-coming death a little thing,
ing again the pleasure of past years,
or my words shall ye forget your tears,
oe *again for aught* that I can say,
'e singer of an empty day.

But rather, when aweary of your mirth,
From full hearts still unsatisfied ye sigh,
And, feeling kindly unto all the earth,
Grudge every minute as it passes by,
Made the more mindful that the sweet days die—
Remember me a little then I pray,
The idle singer of an empty day.

The heavy trouble, the bewildering care
That weighs us down who live and earn our bread,
These idle verses have no power to bear;
So let me sing of names rememberèd,
Because they, living not, can ne'er be dead,
Or long time take their memory quite away
From us poor singers of an empty day.

Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time,
Why should I strive to set the crooked straight?
Let it suffice me that my murmuring rhyme
Beats with light wing against the ivory gate,
Telling a tale not too importunate
To those who in the sleepy region stay,
Lulled by the singer of an empty day.

Folk say, a wizard to a northern king
At Christmas-tide such wondrous things did show,
That through one window men beheld the spring,
And through another saw the summer glow,
And through a third the fruited vines a-row,
While still, unheard, but in its wonted way,
Piped the drear wind of that December day.

So with this Earthly Paradise it is,
If ye will read aright, and pardon me,
Who strive to build a shadowy isle of bliss

Midmost the beating of the steely sea,
Where tossed about all hearts of men must be;
Whose ravening monsters mighty men shall slay,
Not the poor singer of an empty day.

PROLOGUE

(From the same)

Forget six counties overhung with smoke,
Forget the snorting steam and piston stroke,
Forget the spreading of the hideous town;
Think rather of the pack-horse on the down,
And dream of London, small, and white, and clean,
The clear Thames bordered by its gardens green;
Think, that below bridge the green lapping waves
Smite some few keels that bear Levantine staves,
Cut from the yew wood on the burnt-up hill,
And pointed jars that Greek hands toiled to fill,
And treasured scanty spice from some far sea,
Florence gold cloth, and Ypres napery,
And cloth of Bruges, and hogsheads of Guienne;
While nigh the thronged wharf Geoffrey Chaucer's pen
Moves over bills of lading,—'mid such times
Shall dwell the hollow puppets of my rhymes.

JUNE

(From the same)

O June, O June, that we desirèd so,
Wilt thou not make us happy on this day?
Across the river thy soft breezes blow
Sweet with the scent of beanfields far away,
Above our heads rustle the aspens gray,
Calm is the sky with harmless clouds beset,
No *thought of* storm the morning vexes yet.

See, we have left our hopes and fear behind
To give our very hearts up unto thee;
What better place than this then could we find
By this sweet stream that knows not of the sea,
That guesses not the city's misery,
This little stream whose hamlets scarce have names,
This far-off, lonely mother of the Thames?

Here then, O June, thy kindness will we take;
And if indeed but pensive men we seem,
What should we do? thou wouldst not have us wake
From out the arms of this rare happy dream,
And wish to leave the murmur of the stream,
The rustling boughs, the twitter of the birds,
And all thy thousand peaceful happy words.

L'ENVOI

(From the same)

"Death have we hated, knowing not what it meant;
Life have we loved, through green leaf and through sere,
Though still the less we knew of its intent:
The Earth and Heaven through countless year on year,
Slow changing, were to us but curtains fair
Hung round about a little room, where play
Weeping and laughter of man's empty day.

"O Master, if thine heart could love us yet,
Spite of things left undone, and wrongly done,
Some place in loving hearts then should we get,
For thou, sweet-souled, didst never stand alone,
But knew'st the joy and woe of many an one—
By lovers dead, who live through thee, we pray,
thus us singers of an empty day!"

arest thou, Book, what answer thou mayst gain,
he should scorn thee, and thereof thou die?
, it shall not be.—Thou mayst toil in vain,
never draw the House of Fame anigh;
he and his shall know whereof we cry,
l call it not ill done to strive to lay
ghosts that crowd about life's empty day.

hen let the others go! and if indeed
ome old garden thou and I have wrought,
made fresh flowers spring up from hoarded seed,
fragrance of old days and deeds have brought
k to folk weary; all was not for nought.
o little part it was for me to play—
idle singer of an empty day.

DRAWING NEAR THE LIGHT

(From the same)

Lo, when we wade the tangled wood,
In haste and hurry to be there,
Nought seem its leaves and blossoms good,
For all that they be fashioned fair.

But looking up, at last we see
The glimmer of the open light,
From o'er the place where we would be:
Then grow the very brambles bright.

So now, amidst our day of strife,
With many a matter glad we play,
When once we see the light of life
Gleam through the tangle of to-day.

Eugene Lee-Hamilton

1845–1907

SONNETS *

(From *Mimma Bella*, 1909)

X.

'Tis Christmas, and we gaze with downbent head
On something that the post has brought too late
To reach thee, Mimma, through the narrow gate,
From one who did not know that thou art dead:

A picture-book, to play with on thy bed;
And we, who should have heard thee laugh and prate
So busily, sit here at war with Fate,
And turn the pages silently instead.

O that I knew thee playing 'neath God's eyes,
With the small souls of all the dewy flowers
That strewed thy grave, and died at Autumn's breath;

Or, with the phantom of the doll that lies
Beside thee for Eternity's long hours,
In the dim nursery that men call Death.

XXIII.

Do you recall the scents, the insect whirr,
Where we had laid her in the chestnut shade?
How discs of sunlight through the bright leaves played
Upon the grass, as we bent over her?

* *Reprinted from Mimma Bella, by permission of Duffield & Co.*

v roving breezes made the bracken stir
ide her, while the bumble-bee, arrayed
›rown and gold, hummed round her, and the glade
s strewn with last year's chestnuts' prickly fur?

re in the forest's ripe and fragrant heat
lay and laughed, and kicked her wee bare feet,
l stretched wee hands to grasp some woodland bell;

l played her little games; and when we said
uckoo," would lift her frock, and hide her head,
ich now, God knows, is hidden but too well.

William Watson

1858–

THE FIRST SKYLARK OF SPRING *

Two worlds hast thou to dwell in, Sweet,—
The virginal untroubled sky,
And this vext region at my feet.—
Alas, but one have I!

To all my songs there clings the shade,
The dulling shade, of mundane care.
They amid mortal mists are made,—
Thine, in immortal air.

My heart is dashed with griefs and fears;
My song comes fluttering, and is gone.
O high above the home of tears,
Eternal Joy, sing on!

* From *The Poems of William Watson*. Copyright, 1905, by the John Company.

Not loftiest bard, of mightiest mind,
  Shall ever chant a note so pure,
Till he can cast this earth behind
  And breathe in heaven secure.

We sing of Life, with stormy breath
  That shakes the lute's distempered strings
We sing of Love, and loveless Death
  Takes up the song we sing.

And born in toils of Fate's control,
  Insurgent from the womb, we strive
With proud unmanumitted soul
  To burst the golden gyve.

Thy spirit knows nor bounds nor bars;
  On thee no shreds of thraldom hang:
Not more enlarged, the morning stars
  Their great Te Deum sang.

But I am fettered to the sod,
  And but forget my bonds an hour;
In amplitude of dreams a god,
  A slave in dearth of power.

And fruitless knowledge clouds my soul,
  And fretful ignorance irks it more.
Thou sing'st as if thou knew'st the whole,
  And lightly held'st thy lore!

Somewhat as thou, Man once could sing,
  In porches of the lucent morn,
Ere he had felt his lack of wing,
  Or cursed his iron bourn.

The springtime bubbled in his throat,
The sweet sky seemed not far above,
And young and lovesome came the note;—
Ah, thine is Youth and Love!

Thou sing'st of what he knew of old,
And dreamlike from afar recalls;
In flashes of forgotten gold
An orient glory falls.

And as he listens, one by one
Life's utmost splendours blaze more nigh;
Less inaccessible the sun,
Less alien grows the sky.

For thou art native to the spheres,
And of the courts of heaven art free,
And carriest to his temporal ears
News from eternity;

And lead'st him to the dizzy verge,
And lur'st him o'er the dazzling line,
Where mortal and immortal merge,
And human dies divine.

THE GREAT MISGIVING*

t ours," say some, "the thought of death to dread;
iking no heaven, we fear no fabled hell:
is a feast, and we have banqueted—
iall not the worms as well?

om *The Poems of William Watson.* Copyright, 1905, by the John
Company.

"The after-silence, when the feast is o'er,
And void the places where the minstrels stood,
Differs in nought from what hath been before,
And is nor ill nor good."

Ah, but the Apparition—the dumb sign—
The beckoning finger bidding me forego
The fellowship, the converse, and the wine,
The songs, the festal glow!

And ah, to know not, while with friends I sit,
And while the purple joy is passed about,
Whether 'tis ampler day divinelier lit
Or homeless night without;

And whether, stepping forth, my soul shall see
New prospects, or fall sheer—a blinded thing!
There is, O grave, thy hourly victory,
And there, O death, thy sting.

SONNET *

I think the immortal servants of mankind,
Who, from their graves, watch by how slow degrees
The World-Soul greatens with the centuries,
Mourn most Man's barren levity of mind,
The ear to no grave harmonies inclined,
The witless thirst for false wit's worthless lees,
The laugh mistimed in tragic presences,
The eye to all majestic meanings blind.

O prophets, martyrs, saviours, *ye* were great,
All truth being great to you: ye deemed Man more
Than a dull jest, God's ennui to amuse:
The world, for you, held purport: Life ye wore
Proudly, as Kings their solemn robes of state;
And humbly, as the mightiest monarchs use.

* *From The Poems of William Watson.* Copyright, 1905, by the John
npany.

W. E. Henley

1849–1903

TO R. T. H. B.

(Written 1875)

Out of the night that covers me,
  Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
  For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
  I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
  My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
  Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
  Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
  How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
  I am the captain of my soul.

TO H. B. M. W.

Where forlorn sunsets flare and fade
  On desolate sea and lonely sand,
Out of the silence and the shade
  What is the voice of strange command
Calling you still, as friend calls friend
  With love that cannot brook delay,
To rise and follow the ways that wend
  Over the hills and far away?

Hark in the city, street on street
A roaring reach of death and life,
Of vortices that clash and fleet
And ruin in appointed strife,
Hark to it calling, calling clear,
Calling until you cannot stay
From dearer things than your own most d
Over the hills and far away.

Out of the sound of the ebb-and-flow,
Out of the sight of lamp and star,
It calls you where the good winds blow,
And the unchanging meadows are:
From faded hopes and hopes agleam,
It calls you, calls you night and day
Beyond the dark into the dream
Over the hills and far away.

SONG

(Written 1876)

Your heart has trembled to my tongue,
Your hands in mine have lain,
Your thought to me has leaned and clung,
Again and yet again,
My dear,
Again and yet again.

Now die the dream, or come the wife,
The past is not in vain,
For wholly as it was your life
Can never be again,
My dear,
Can never be again.

R. L. Stevenson

1850–1894

A SONG OF THE ROAD

(From *Underwoods*, 1887)

The gauger walked with willing foot,
And aye the gauger played the flute;
And what should Master Gauger play
But *Over the hills and far away?*

Whene'er I buckle on my pack
And foot it gaily in the track
O pleasant gauger, long since dead,
I hear you fluting on ahead.

You go with me the self-same way—
The self-same air for me you play;
For I do think and so do you
It is the tune to travel to.

For who would gravely set his face
To go to this or t'other place?
There's nothing under heav'n so blue
That's fairly worth the travelling to.

On every hand the roads begin,
And people walk with zeal therein;
But wheresoe'er the highways tend,
Be sure there's nothing at the end.

Then follow you, wherever hie
The travelling mountains of the sky.
Or let the streams of civil mode
Direct your choice upon a road;

For one and all, or high or low,
Will lead you where you wish to go;
And one and all go night and day
Over the hills and far away!

THE CELESTIAL SURGEON

(From the same)

If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain:—
Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take
And stab my spirit broad awake;
Or, Lord, if too obdurate I,
Choose thou, before that spirit die,
A piercing pain, a killing sin,
And to my dead heart run them in!

THE COUNTERBLAST—1886

(From the same)

My bonny man, the warld, it's true,
Was made for neither me nor you;
It's just a place to warstle through,
As Job confessed o't;
And aye the best that we'll can do
Is mak the best o't.

There's rowth o' wrang, I'm free to say:
The simmer brunt, the winter blae,
The face of earth a' fyled wi' clay
An' dour wi' chuckies,
An' life a rough an' land'art play
For country buckies.

An' food's anither name for clart;
An' beasts an' brambles bite an' scart;
An' what would WE be like, my heart!
If bared o' claethin'?
—Aweel, I cannae mend your cart:
It's that or naethin'.

A feck o' folk frae first to last
Have through this queer experience passed;
Twa-three, I ken, just damn an' blast
The hale transaction;
But twa-three ithers, east an' wast,
Fand satisfaction.

Whaur braid the briery muirs expand,
A waefu' an' a weary land,
The bumblebees, a gowden band,
Are blithely hingin';
An' there the canty wanderer fand
The laverock singin'.

Trout in the burn grow great as herr'n;
The simple sheep can find their fair'n';
The wind blaws clean about the cairn
Wi' caller air;
The muircock an' the barefit bairn
Are happy there.

Sic-like the howes o' life to some:
Green loans whaur they ne'er fash their thumb
But mark the muckle winds that come,
Soopin' an' cool,
Or hear the powrin' burnie drum
In the shilfa's pool.

The evil wi' the guid they tak;
They ca' a gray thing gray, no black;
To a steigh brae, a stubborn back
Addressin' daily;
An' up the rude, unbieldy track
O' life, gang gaily.

What you would like's a palace ha',
Or Sinday parlour dink an' braw
Wi' a' things ordered in a raw
By denty leddies.
Weel, than, ye cannae hae't: that's a'
That to be said is.

An' since at life ye've ta'en the grue,
An' winnae blithely hirsle through,
Ye've fund the very thing to do—
That's to drink speerit;
An' shüne we'll hear the last o' you—
An' blithe to hear it!

The shoon ye coft, the life ye lead,
Ithers will heir when aince ye're deid;
They'll heir your tasteless bite o' breid,
An' find it sappy;
They'll to your dulefü' house succeed,
An' there be happy.

As whan a glum an' fractious wean
Has sat an' sullened by his lane
Till, wi' a rowstin' skelp, he's taen
An' shoo'd to bed—
The ither bairns a' fa' to play'n',
As gleg's a gled.

A LAD THAT IS GONE

(From the same)

Sing me a song of a lad that is gone,
Say, could that lad be I?
Merry of soul he sailed on a day
Over the sea to Skye.

Mull was astern, Rum on the port,
Egg on the starboard bow;
Glory of youth glowed in his soul:
Where is that glory now?

Sing me a song of a lad that is gone,
Say, could that lad be I?
Merry of soul he sailed on a day
Over the sea to Skye.

Give me again all that was there,
Give me the sun that shone!
Give me the eyes, give me the soul,
Give me the lad that's gone!

Sing me a song of a lad that is gone,
Say, could that lad be I?
Merry of soul he sailed on a day
Over the sea to Skye.

Billow and breeze, islands and seas,
  Mountains of rain and sun,
All that was good, all that was fair,
  All that was me is gone.

REQUIEM

(From the same)

Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
  And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
  And the hunter home from the hill.

Henry John Newbolt

1862–

HOPE THE HORN-BLOWER*

"Hark ye, hark to the winding horn;
Sluggards, awake, and front the morn!
Hark ye, hark to the winding horn;
  The sun's on meadow and mill.
Follow me, hearts that love the chase;
Follow me, feet that keep the pace:
Stirrup to stirrup we ride, we ride,
  We ride by moor and hill."

* *Reprinted by permission from Newbolt's The Sailing of the Ships.* Copyright, 1902, by D. Appleton & Co.

Huntsman, huntsman, whither away?
What is the quarry afoot to-day?
Huntsman, huntsman, whither away,
And what the game ye kill?
Is it the deer, that men may dine?
Is it the wolf that tears the kine?
What is the race ye ride, ye ride,
Ye ride by moor and hill?

"Ask not yet till the day be dead
What is the game that's forward fled,
Ask not yet till the day be dead
The game we follow still.
An echo it may be, floating past;
A shadow it may be, fading fast:
Shadow or echo, we ride, we ride,
We ride by moor and hill."

WHEN I REMEMBER*

'hen I remember that the day will come
For this our love to quit his land of birth,
And bid farewell to all the ways of earth
'ith lips that must for evermore be dumb,

hen creep I silent from the stirring hum,
And shut away the music and the mirth,
And reckon up what may be left of worth
'hen hearts are cold and love's own body numb.

ɔmething there must be that I know not here
r know too dimly through the symbol dear;
Some touch, some beauty, only guessed by this—
He that made us loves, it shall replace,
eloved, even the vision of thy face
And deep communion of thine inmost kiss.

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THE ONLY SON *

O bitter wind toward the sunset blowing,
What of the dales to-night?
In yonder gray old hall what fires are glowing,
What ring of festal light?

"In the great window as the day was dwindling
I saw an old man stand;
His head was proudly held and his eyes kindling,
But the list shook in his hand."

O wind of twilight, was there no word uttered,
No sound of joy or wail?
"'A great fight and a good death,' he muttered;
'Trust him, he would not fail.'"

What of the chamber dark where she was lying
For whom all life is done?
"Within her heart she rocks a dead child, crying
'My son, my little son.'"

Rudyard Kipling

1865–

A BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST

(From *Macmillan's Magazine*, December, 1889)

Kamal is out with twenty men to raise the Border side,
And he has lifted the Colonel's mare, that is the Colonel's pride:

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has lifted her out of the stable-door between the dawn and the day,
d turned the calkins upon her feet, and ridden her far away.
en up and spoke the Colonel's son that led a troop of the Guides:
s there never a man of all my men can say where Kamal hides?"
en up and spoke Mahommed Khan, the son of the Ressaldar,
f ye know the track of the morning-mist, ye know where his pickets are.
t dusk he harries the Abazai—at dawn he is into Bonair—
ut he must go by Fort Monroe to his own place to fare,
o if ye gallop to Fort Monroe as fast as a bird can fly,
y the favour of God ye may cut him off ere he win to the Tongue of Jagai.
ut if he be passed the Tongue of Jagai, right swiftly turn ye then,
or the length and the breadth of that grisly plain is sown with Kamal's men."
he Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a raw rough dun was he,
th the mouth of a bell and the heart of Hell and the head of the gallows-tree.
e Colonel's son to the Fort has won, they bid him stay to eat—
ho rides at the tail of a Border thief, he sits not long at his meat.
e's up and away from Fort Monroe as fast as he can fly,
ll *he was aware* of his father's mare in the gut of *the Tongue* of Jagai,

Till he was aware of his father's mare with Kamal upon her back,
And when he could spy the white of her eye, he made the pistol crack.
He has fired once, he has fired twice, but the whistling ball went wide.
"Ye shoot like a soldier," Kamal said. "Show now if ye can ride."
It's up and over the tongue of Jagai, as blown dust-devils go,
The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the mare like a barren doe.
The dun he leaned against the bit and slugged his head above,
But the red-mare played with the snaffle-bars as a lad plays with a glove.
They have ridden the low moon out of the sky, their hoofs drum up the dawn,
The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the mare like a new-roused fawn.
The dun he fell at a water-course—in a woful heap fell he,—
And Kamal has turned the red-mare back, and pulled the rider free.
He has knocked the pistol out of his hand—small room was there to strive—
"'Twas only by favour of mine," quoth he, "ye rode so long alive;
"There was not a rock for twenty mile, there was not a clump of tree,
"But covered a man of my own men with his rifle cocked on his knee.
"If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have held it low,
"The little jackals that flee so fast were feasting all in a row;

"If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I have hel
it high,
"The kite that whistles above us now were gorged til
she could not fly."
Lightly answered the Colonel's son:—"Do good t
bird and beast,
"But count who come for the broken meats before thou
makest a feast.
"If there should follow a thousand swords to carry m
bones away,
"Belike the price of a jackal's meal were more than
thief could pay.
"They will feed their horse on the standing crop, thei
men on the garnered grain,
"The thatch of the byres will serve their fires when al
the cattle are slain.
"But if thou thinkest the price be fair, and th
brethren wait to sup,
"The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn,—howl, dog, an
call them up!
"And if thou thinkest the price be high, in steer an
gear and stack,
"Give me my father's mare again, and I'll fight m
own way back!"
Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set hin
upon his feet.
"No talk shall be of dogs," said he, "when wolf an
grey wolf meet.
"May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in deed o
breath.
"What dam of lances brought thee forth to jest at th
dawn with death?"
Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "I hold by th
blood of my clan;
Take up the mare for my father's gift—she will car
no better man!"

The red-mare ran to the Colonel's son, and nuzzled against his breast,
"We be two strong men," said Kamal then, "but she loveth the younger best.
"So she shall go with a lifter's dower, my turquoise-studded rein,
"My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and silver stirrups twain."
The Colonel's son a pistol drew and held it muzzle end,
"Ye have taken the one from a foe," said he; "will ye take the mate from a friend?"
"A gift for a gift," said Kamal straight; "a limb for the risk of a limb,
"Thy father hast sent his son to me, I'll send my son to him!"
With that he whistled his only son, that dropped from a mountain crest—
He trod the ling like a buck in spring and he looked like a lance in rest.
"Now here is thy master," Kamal said, "who leads a troop of the Guides,
"And thou must ride at his left side as shield to shoulder rides.
"Till Death or I cut loose the tie, at camp and board and bed,
"Thy life is his—thy fate it is to guard him with thy head.
"And thou must eat the White Queen's meat, and all her foes are thine,
"And thou must harry thy father's hold for the peace of the Border-line,
"And thou must make a trooper tough and hack thy way to power—
"*Belike* they will raise thee to Ressaldar when I am *hanged* in Peshawur."

They have looked each other between the eyes, and
there they found no fault,
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on
leavened bread and salt;
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on
fire and fresh-cut sod,
On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber knife, and the
wondrous names of God.
The Colonel's son he rides the mare and Kamal's boy
the dun,
And two have come back to Fort Monroe where there
went forth but one.
And when they drew to the Quarter-Guard, full twenty
swords flew clear—
There was not a man but carried his feud with the
blood of the mountaineer.
"Ha' done! Ha' done!" said the Colonel's son. "Put
up the steel at your sides!
"Last night ye had struck at a Border thief—to-night
'tis a man of the Guides!"

Oh, east is east, and west is west, and never the two
shall meet
Till earth and sky stand presently at God's great Judg-
ment Seat.
But there is neither east nor west, border or breed or
birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, though they
come from the ends of the earth.

MANDALAY

By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to the
sea,
There's a Burma girl a-settin', an' I know she thinks
o' me;

For the wind is in the palm-trees, an' the temple-bells they say:
"Come you back, you British soldier; come you back to Mandalay!"
Come you back to Mandalay
Where the old Flotilla lay:
Can't you 'ear their paddles chunkin' from Rangoon to Mandalay?
Oh, the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the Bay!

'Er petticut was yaller an' 'er little cap was green,
An' 'er name was Supi-yaw-lat—jes' the same as Thee-baw's Queen,
An' I seed her fust a-smokin' of a whackin' white cheroot,
An' a-wastin' Christian kisses on an 'eathen idol's foot:
Bloomin' idol made o' mud—
Wot they called the Great Gawd Budd—
Plucky lot she cared for idols when I kissed 'er where she stud!
On the road to Mandalay—

When the mist was on the rice-fields an' the sun was droppin' slow,
She'd git 'er little banjo an' she'd sing "*Kulla-lo-lo!*"
With 'er arm upon my shoulder an' her cheek agin my cheek
We uster watch the steamers an' the *hathis* pilin' teak.
Elephints a-pilin' teak
In the sludgy, squdgy creek,
Where the silence 'ung that 'eavy you was 'arf afraid to speak!
On the road to Mandalay—

ut that's all shove be'ind me—long ago an' fur away,
n' there ain't no 'buses runnin' from the Benk to Mandalay;
n' I'm learnin' 'ere in London what the ten-year sodger tells:
[f you've 'eard the East a-callin', why, you won't 'eed nothin' else."
No! you won't 'eed nothin' else
But them spicy garlic smells
An' the sunshine an' the palm-trees an' the tinkly temple bells!
On the road to Mandalay—

am sick o' wastin' leather on these gutty pavin'-stones,
n' the blasted Henglish drizzle wakes the fever in my bones;
ao' I walks with fifty 'ousemaids outer Chelsea to the Strand,
n' they talks a lot o' lovin', but wot do they understand?
Beefy face an' grubby 'and—
Law! wot *do* they understand?
I've a neater, sweeter maiden in a cleaner, greener land!
On the road to Mandalay—

ıip me somewheres east of Suez where the best is like the worst,
here there aren't no Ten Commandments, an' a man can raise a thirst;
›r the temple-bells are callin', an' it's there that I would be—
r the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' lazy at the sea—
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay,

With our sick beneath the awnings when we went
to Mandalay!
Oh, the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China
'crost the Bay!

RECESSIONAL

God of our fathers, known of old—
Lord of our far-flung battle line—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies—
The Captains and the Kings depart—
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Far-called our navies melt away—
On dune and headland sinks the fire—
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe—
Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not Thee to guard.
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord!

AMEN.

William Butler Yeats

1865–

DOWN BY THE SALLEY GARDENS*

›wn by the salley gardens my love and I did meet;
ıe passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.
ıe bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree;
ıt I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.

a field by the river my love and I did stand,
ıd on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand.
ıe bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs;
ıt I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

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THE ROSE OF THE WORLD*

Who dreamed that beauty passes like a dream?
For these red lips, with all their mournful pride,
Mournful that no new wonder may betide,
Troy passed away in one high funeral gleam,
And Usna's children died.

We and the labouring world are passing by:
Amid men's souls, that waver and give place,
Like the pale waters in their wintry race,
Under the passing stars, foam of the sky,
Lives on this lonely face.

Bow down, archangels, in your dim abode:
Before you were, or any hearts to beat,
Weary and kind one lingered by His seat;
He made the world to be a grassy road
Before her wandering feet.

Stephen Phillips

1868–

TWILIGHT†

I.

Red skies above a level land
And thought of thee;
Sinking sun on reedy strand,
And alder tree.

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II.

Only the heron sailing home,
With heavy flight:
Ocean afar in silent foam,
And coming night.

III.

Dwindling day and drowsing birds,
O my child!
Dimness and returning herds,
Memory wild.

Alfred Noyes

1880–

THE CALL OF THE SPRING *

Come, choose your road and away, my lad,
Come, choose your road and away!
We'll out of the town by the road's bright crown
As it dips to the dazzling day.
It's a long white road for the weary;
But it rolls through the heart of the May.

Though many a road would merrily ring
To the tramp of your marching feet,
All roads are one from the day that's done,
And the miles are swift and sweet,
And the graves of your friends are the mile-stones
To the land where all roads meet.

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But the call that you hear this day, my lad,
  Is the Spring's old bugle of mirth
When the year's green fire in a soul's desire
  Is brought like a rose to the birth;
And knights ride out to adventure
  As the flowers break out of the earth.

Over the sweet-smelling mountain-passes
  The clouds lie brightly curled;
The wild-flowers cling to the crags and swing
  With cataract-dews impearled;
And the way, the way that you choose this day
  Is the way to the end of the world.

It rolls from the golden long ago
  To the land that we ne'er shall find;
And it's uphill here, but it's downhill there,
  For the road is wise and kind,
And all rough places and cheerless faces
  Will soon be left behind.

Come, choose your road and away, away,
  We'll follow the gypsy sun;
For it's soon, too soon to the end of the day,
  And the day is well begun;
And the road rolls on through the heart of the M
  And there's never a May but one.

There's a fir-wood here, and a dog-rose there,
  And a note of the mating dove;
And a glimpse, maybe, of the warm blue sea,
  And the warm white clouds above;
And warm to your breast in a tenderer nest
  Your sweetheart's little glove.

here's not much better to win, my lad,
There's not much better to win!
ou have lived, you have loved, you have fought, you
have proved
The worth of folly and sin;
ɔ now come out of the City's rout,
Come out of the dust and the din.

ɔme out,—a bundle and stick is all
You'll need to carry along,
your heart can carry a kindly word,
And your lips can carry a song;
ɔu may leave the lave to the keep o' the grave,
If your lips can carry a song!

me, choose your road and away, my lad,
Come, choose your road and away!
e'll out of the town by the road's bright crown,
As it dips to the sapphire day!
l roads may meet at the world's end,
But, hey for the heart of the May!
me, choose your road and away, dear lad,
Come choose your road and away.

UNITY *

I.

Heart of my heart, the world is young;
Love lies hidden in every rose!
Every song that the skylark sung
Once, we thought, must come to a close:

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Now we know the spirit of song,
Song that is merged in the chant of the whole,
Hand in hand as we wander along,
What should we doubt of the years that roll?

II.

Heart of my heart, we cannot die!
Love triumphant in flower and tree,
Every life that laughs at the sky
Tells us nothing can cease to be:
One, we are one with a song to-day,
One with the clover that scents the wold,
One with the Unknown, far away,
One with the stars, when earth grows old.

III.

Heart of my heart, we are one with the wind,
One with the clouds that are whirled o'er the lea,
One in many, O broken and blind,
One as the waves are at one with the sea!
Ay! when life seems scattered apart,
Darkens, ends as a tale that is told,
One, we are one, O heart of my heart,
One, still one, while the world grows old.